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Strictures on African Slavery
by
Samuel Crothers.





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Slavery Rev.

STRICTURES

ON

AFRICAN SLAVERY.

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BY SAMUEL CROTHERS.

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The Executive Committee of the Abolition Society of Paint Valley, having met at Greenfield, May 4, 1833—and having heard, in part, a manuscript by Rev. SAMUEL CROTHERS, containing Strictures on African Slavery, requested him to publish the same—and ordered the Treasurer to defray the expense of publication.

JOSEPH T. IRWIN, Rec. Sec.

21, 6, 22/6/11

STRICTURES ON SLAVERY.



Modern writers on the subject of Slavery, speak of it as of very remote antiquity. They tell us, it existed before the flood; and this is the usual introduction to the bold assertion, that it prevailed in the families of the patriarchs, was licensed by the law of God given by Moses, and winked at by our Lord and his Apostles. They generally express their hatred of it, as inconsistent with purity of morals, and the interests of any community in which it is tolerated. But they assign various reasons for its being permitted, as they suppose, in every period of the church. Some of them assure us, that under the patriarchs it was exceedingly mild. Others tell us that, owing to its previous existence among believers and pagans, Moses could not abolish it, although he was fully sensible of its evils. Many of them insist, that the apostles refrained from opposition to it, from a prudent resolution not to give offence. The only reason we have seen assigned, as sufficient to account for its being tolerated under both dispensations is, *the hardness of our hearts.*

Our Lord tells his hearers, that the ordinance respecting divorce, (Deut. xxiv. 1.) was given on account of the *hardness of their hearts*—i. e. it was a statute for the relief of unfortunate females, who had fallen into the hands of hard-hearted husbands. From this, some of the apologists for slavery infer, that it was found necessary to indulge men in some sin, because *their hearts are hard or wicked.*

That the practice of depriving men of their freedom, (and, we might add, of their lives and property,) existed in the world very early, we have no doubt. We could believe this, without any other proof than the simple fact, that this world always has been inhabited by enemies to God, and haters of one another. But that the church has always been polluted with this sin as it now is, or that it is countenanced by the word of God, we cannot believe. In the following pages, we shall endeavor briefly to shew, that *African slavery was introduced into the church by the Pope; that its most able advocates have failed in their appeals to the Scriptures; that our churches are polluted with this sin, and their cleansing is necessary to save them from ruin; that the argument drawn from the example of the Antediluvians is absurd; and that the plea that Abraham was a slaveholder, is false and slanderous.*

1. African Slavery was introduced into the Christian Church by the Pope of Rome.

Christians universally take pleasure in tracing their virtuous practices to the example of our Lord, or his apostles, or the church in the purest times of reformation. How, then, shall we account for the prevailing shyness of the question, with whom did the oppression of the Africans originate? The humiliating truth is, African slavery in the christian

church, is the child of the "Mother of Abominations." This is proved by scripture prophecy, by history, and by the fact that the whole defence of slavery is Popish, both in its origin and spirit.

1. *It is proved by scripture prophecy.* [Rev. 17 & 18.]—The apostle John, when in the Isle of Patmos, saw in vision a church so corrupted, as to become *the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird.* Upon her forehead a name was written, *Mystery, Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots, and abominations of the earth.* He heard a voice from heaven saying, *come out of her my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.* And in the list of her sins, we find it distinctly noticed, that she made merchandize of *slaves and souls of men.* Rev. xviii. 13. Thus the question, as regards the guilt of the church of Rome, is decided by the paramount authority; and we are furnished with a clue in our historical inquiries. We are instructed to look, in the history of that church, for the traffic in bodies and souls of men, about the time when Great Babylon became a habitation of devils, and so filthy that the children of God must come out of her, to escape her sins and her plagues.

2. *It is proved by history.* "Before the period of the reformation, the Pope had, in the most audacious manner, declared himself the sovereign of the whole world. All the parts of it which were inhabited by those who were not christians, he accounted to be inhabited by *nobody*; and if christians took it into their heads to possess any of those countries, he gave them full liberty to make war upon the inhabitants without any provocation, and to treat them with no more humanity than they would have treated beasts. The countries, if conquered, were to be parcelled out according to the Pope's pleasure; and dreadful was the situation of that prince who refused to obey the will of the pontiff. In consequence of this extraordinary authority, which the Pope had assumed, he at last granted to the king of Portugal all the countries to the eastward of Cape Non, in Africa; and to the king of Spain, all the countries to the westward of it. In this was completed the character of *Antichrist, sitting in the temple of God, shewing himself as God.* He had long before assumed the supremacy belonging to the Deity himself, in spiritual matters; and now he assumed the same supremacy in worldly matters also—giving the extreme regions of the earth to whom he pleased."

[Reformation—Buck's Theological Dictionary.

Pagans had long, prior to this event, maintained that captives, taken in war, might be reduced to slavery, and held *as no men, as dead men, and beasts.* There was nothing in paganism, to put such a principle to the blush. But that slave making is a christian business, and that those who are not christians are *nobody*, and that it is the privilege of christians to make war upon them and treat them as beasts; was a discovery reserved for the "son of perdition." Truly, the world had never seen him in all his frightfulness, until he exhibited himself in the temple *as God*, distributing, among his favorite sons, heathen countries, with all their inhabitants—just as some mighty man of wealth would divide his well-stocked farms among his children. About fifty years before the reformation, we

see the king of Portugal, under protection of the Roman Pontiffs, taking possession of several islands and havens on the coast of Africa, for the purpose of obtaining slaves by force and barter. Thus "Great Babylon" was fulfilling the prediction, (Rev. xviii. 13.) and filling up the cup of her iniquity, and preparing herself for that terrible destruction, over which "heaven, and the holy apostles and prophets," are called upon to rejoice. [See Africa—New Edinburgh Encyclopedia. Also, Report of the Colonization Society, A. D. 1832.

It was not difficult in such an age as that immediately preceding the reformation, to reconcile both the church and the world to such a work as slave making. It bid fair to be profitable; it was represented as a pious undertaking, essentially necessary to the propagation of the true religion; *the end sanctified the deed*; the Pope had authorized it; and more than fifty years afterwards, even Luther thought that if he doubted the Pope's infallibility, the earth would swallow him alive. When the Portuguese took possession of Angola, on the western coast of Africa, to obtain slaves, they solicited the court of Rome for a large supply of priests and missionaries. The historian says, "the prospect of so rich a harvest, induced great numbers of all religious orders, but especially of the Jesuits, to volunteer as labourers." The result was, the work of proselyting and kidnapping went hand in hand, and was carried on with great success. In the neighbourhood of San Paulo de Loando, the Jesuits, with old father Anthony at their head, had under their oversight 12,000 slaves, labouring on farms and gardens. They boasted, that in ten years from the year 1580, they had converted and baptized 20,000 souls. How many had been slaughtered in slave making wars during that period—and how many had been shipped off for other slave markets—we are not told. In the neighboring province of Congo, the number of exported slaves amounted, during the same length of time, to about 160,000.—[See Angola, &c. New Edin. Encyc.

The history of South America, and the neighboring islands, discloses the same system of iniquity. "Before Columbus set sail on his second voyage, it was deemed necessary to obtain a grant from the Pope, who, as the head of the church, and vice-gerent of the Almighty, claimed dominion over all the kingdoms of the earth. Accordingly, his holiness granted, with great form and solemnity, to Ferdinand and Isabella, and their successors, forever, all the countries inhabited by infidels, which they had discovered, or might discover, but did not undertake to bound or describe them, as he was ignorant not only of their situation, but even of their existence. To prevent, however, this grant from interfering with one previously made to the crown of Portugal, he directed that a line should be supposed to be drawn one hundred leagues westward of the Azores, from pole to pole, and all the unknown countries east of this line, were given to the Portuguese—and those west, to the Spaniards. The consideration of the grant was, the propagation of christianity among the heathen nations in the western regions, which Ferdinand engaged to do. Accordingly, father Boyle, and several other friars, accompanied Columbus in his second voyage, to instruct the nations in christianity." Ten years after the discovery of the continent, two expeditions were fitted out, for the purpose of effecting permanent settlements. "These adventurers

were instructed to acquaint the natives with the primary articles of christianity, and particularly to inform them of the *supreme jurisdiction of the Pope*, and of the grant which he had made of their country, to the king of Spain—and then to require them to embrace christianity, and to acknowledge the authority of the Spanish sovereign. And in case the natives did not comply with these requirements, they were told it would be lawful to attack them with fire and sword, exterminate them, and reduce their wives and children to servitude." The account given of the baptism of Atahuelpa, one of the Incas, exhibits the spirit of these slave-making missionaries. At his first interview with Pizarro and his armed force, the chaplain, through the interpreter, explained to him some of the mysteries of christianity, the power of the Pope, and his grant to the king of Spain; and concluded by requiring him to acknowledge the Pope and the christian religion, and submit to the king of Castile; and in case he refused, he denounced war against him in the name of his sovereign. The monarch, indignant and astonished at such impudence, wished to know where he obtained his authority. "In this book," said father Velvinde, reaching to him his breviary. The Inca took it in his hand, and turning over the leaves, and raising it to his ear, observed, "this book is silent—it tells me nothing;" and threw it on the ground in a contemptuous manner. The monk, turning to his countrymen in a rage, exclaimed, "To arms, christians!—to arms! The word of God is insulted. Avenge this profanation on these impious dogs." Immediately the martial music struck up; the engines of death were made ready; and in a few minutes four thousand Peruvians were lying dead. The wretched monarch was seized and imprisoned; and after paying the immense sum of gold required as the price of his ransom, he was condemned by a mock trial to be burnt. The Priests urged him to be baptized, and die a christian. But "the only argument that had any influence was, that of mitigating his punishment; and on the promise of being strangled, instead of being consumed by a slow fire, he consented to be baptized by the hand of one of his murderers, who exercised the holy functions of priest." By force and fraud, they were very successful in the work of proselyting. In a few years, upwards of 4,000,000 of Mexicans were baptized. One ecclesiastic baptized five thousand in one day—and stopped only when he became so exhausted as to be unable to lift up his hands.

It does not appear that a profession of christianity secured to the natives any thing like affection. The treatment which the converts received at the hands of the Jesuits, was extremely cruel. In the year 1668, we see them labouring as slaves under the oversight of the Jesuits, in rebuilding Santa Fe—and in the following year, five hundred of them were employed on the fortifications and Cathedral of Buenos Ayres. From the first, the Spanish adventurers reduced the natives to servitude. "Every where they were seized upon, and compelled to follow the armies, to carry their baggage, to work in the mines, to cultivate the earth, to carry burdens, for the want of domestic animals, and to perform all menial and laborious services. Whether employed in mines, in agriculture, or other situations, they were required to perform tasks much beyond their abilities; and being unaccustomed to regular labour, thousands sunk under accumulated burdens and hardships, to which they were subjected by

their unfeeling and rapacious masters. Their native spirit was broken, they became humbled and degraded, and the race was rapidly wasting away. It is stated by Robertson and others, that in the space of fifteen years after the Spaniards landed, the Indians in Hispaniola were reduced from 1,000,000 to 60,000. At length, the Africans were found to be more capable of enduring oppression; and under the protection of papal infallibility, they were imported in great numbers—and thus the natives were saved from extirpation.—[See histories of South America, by a citizen of the U. States, Robertson and others.

Such is the true origin of African slavery among christians. For a considerable time, the infallibility of the Pope was sufficient to sustain it. But at length, as the light of the Reformation increased, something else was found necessary to quiet the world. Accordingly, the Jesuits and other Popish authors, laboured hard to prove from the Bible, that the slave trade and slavery, in some form, were of divine origin, and had been cherished by divine enactments, and the example of the most distinguished worthies, almost from the beginning. And if the Pope of Rome, ever relaxes his gravity, and indulges in merriment, it must be when he sees Protestant divines, with all their hatred of Popery, so fairly duped by Popish writers, as to copy their notions and arguments into books for Sabbath Schools and Colleges, and Theological Seminaries—representing slavery as mysterious in its origin, and venerable for its antiquity, practised by the patriarchs, legalized by the law giver at Mount Sinai, and tolerated in the christian churches by our Lord and his apostles.

But how did it happen, that while Protestants professed to reject, in a mass, the abominations of Popery, they retained the sin of slave holding? In answering this question, we must not lose sight of the influence of men's lusts in blinding their understandings, and stupifying their consciences. But there are other considerations. We here see one fruit of that unhallowed alliance of *Church and State*. Protestant churches might have cleansed themselves from this sin, had they not become harlots, by leaning, in imitation of the "mother of harlots," on the arm of kings and emperors, instead of the arm of their husband. When Protestant rulers engaged in the slave trade, they had the church in their keeping. It was a time of no missionary enterprize, and of course of but little concern about either the bodies or souls of the heathen. The traffic was managed with an adroitness worthy of a better cause. Its horrors were carefully concealed from those who were most likely to be disturbed. Their frightful cargoes of men, women, and children, were shipped to the islands or distant plantations. The great body of christians were contending with a host of enemies, and were so harassed with persecution, that they did not hear the great cry on the wastes of Africa, nor the wailings of the middle passage. So imperfectly were themselves freed from the trammels of Popery, that few of them thought of inquiring whether the Pope was infallible, when he cheered his blood hounds to the work, with the assurance that it would be acceptable in the sight of heaven. In the mean time, had any scruples been felt in any department of the church, it would have required something like the spirit of martyrdom, to enter the lists with those terrible expounders of scripture—THE POWERS THAT BE.

When once any gross sin has obtained a quiet place in the church, it is not difficult to account for its continuance there. It is God's arrangement, that such a sin shall operate as a moral pestilence on the whole community. Thus he chastises the whole body for gross unfaithfulness in the exercise of discipline—and makes the purity of the church the concern of every member. To cleanse the church from an old and gross sin is, without special, divine help, a hopeless undertaking. The Jewish rulers winked at the sin of trampling on their Sabbaths, and of slave making, or refusing to let their brethren go free in the seventh year, and thus in a few years those sins were established in the church. They held on in one of them, during four hundred and ninety years, in defiance of all the threatenings sent them by Jeremiah and other prophets. Nothing could rouse them to the work of cleansing the sanctuary, till it was burnt to ashes, and themselves punished with a captivity of seventy years. Lev. xxvi. 35—43. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 21. Gen. xxxiv. 12—22. The high places remained undisturbed during some of the first reformations, after the days of Solomon. The result was, these nuisances became sacred in the eyes of many subsequent reformers. It is mentioned as a stain on their memories—*howbeit the high places were not taken away.*

3. *The whole defence of African Slavery is Popish, both in its origin and spirit.* We assert, fearless of successful contradiction, that prior to the existence of the slave trade, no christian of piety and intelligence, ever undertook to expound the law of God given by Moses, as authorizing involuntary, hereditary, and perpetual slavery. The blasphemies of the Pope on this subject, have been palmed on the world as the old divinity—as the doctrines which God revealed from heaven. Nor is it strange that the cheat has never been detected, when we advert to the fact, that the most popular writers on slavery have attempted little else than to retail the current notions of Theologians. Any one, who has consulted the Bamberg Commentary, and Jahn on Archaiology, and Calmet's Dictionary, and a few other distinguished Roman Catholic authors, has seen the sum of all that has been advanced on the subject, since the day that the Pope decided that heathens were *nobody*, and encouraged christians to make war upon and oppress them. As illustrations of the above remark, we shall lay before our readers the following extracts. The first is from Jahn, a distinguished papist, and the file leader of modern apologists for slave holding. Jahn says :

“The number in a family was very much increased, by the slaves that were attached to it. It is probable that some of the patriarchs, as was sometimes the case at a later period, with individuals in Greece and Italy, possessed many thousands of them. Slavery existed and prevailed before the deluge. Gen. ix. 25. Moses therefore, although he saw the evils of slavery, was not in a condition to abolish it; and it would not have been wise for him to have made the attempt. He accordingly permitted the Hebrews to possess foreigners, both male and female, in the character of slaves. The Canaanites could not be held in slavery. For them, under existing circumstances, slavery was regarded as too great a privilege, or rather it would have subjected the Jews to too great a hazard. Such was the bad faith of the Canaanites, the greatness of their number, &c. &c.”

The following is a sample of the profound veneration of Protestant writers, for the opinions of a Papist on slavery; and their care not to deviate a hair's breadth from his ideas. It is taken from "An introduction to the critical study and knowledge of the Scriptures," by T. H. Horne, a distinguished divine of the Church of England. This work is so popular, that it has been adopted as a text book in Universities and Theological Seminaries. Mr. Horne says—

"Slavery is of very remote antiquity. It existed before the flood; (Gen. ix. 25)—and when Moses gave his law to the Jews, finding it already established, though he could not abolish it, yet he enacted various salutary laws and regulations. The Israelites might indeed have Hebrew servants or slaves, as well as alien born persons, but these were to be circumcised, and required to worship the only true God, (Gen. xvii. 13--17.) with the exception of the Canaanites, &c."

The following is from Biblical Antiquities—a work prepared for the use of Sabbath School Teachers, by Rev. J. W. Nevin, a Presbyterian, and instructor of students, in one of our Theological Seminaries. Mr. Nevin says—

"Slavery seems to have existed before the flood. Noah speaks of it as a thing well known. Among the ancient patriarchs, it was very common. The servants, of whom we hear in the history of their times, were properly slaves, who might be bought and sold without any regard to their own will. Some of the richer shepherds, like Abraham and Job, appear to have had thousands of them belonging to their households, &c." There are some things in these extracts, worthy of particular notice.

The doctrine that Moses, though sensible of the evils of slave holding, legalized it, because he found it already existing among pagans, and in Abraham's family, carries in its forehead the image of its father. It is mortifying in the extreme, to see it gravely handed out by Protestants as Bible Theology. But we are neither offended nor surprised, to see it in the writings of a Roman Catholic. There it is all natural, and just what we would expect.

The authority which he ascribes to Moses, and the discretionary powers with which he invests him, would suit the meridian of Rome. Pope Gregory 16th, in his late Circular to the Bishops, deploras the prevalence of the absurd and horrible doctrine of liberty of conscience; and, among the remedies, he calls upon the clergy to invoke the Virgin, and St. Peter, and St. Paul, to preserve the Church. We need not, therefore, be surprised, to find an author, in the same communion, not once recognizing God as the author of the Sinai covenant, or as it is usually called, the law of Moses. From his confidence in saints, and his implicit faith in the exploits of the great men at Rome, it was very natural for him to consider Moses as fully competent to the work of making a religion for the old testament church. Moses is left to struggle alone, with his hatred of slavery on the one hand, and its prevalence among pagans, and Abraham's family on the other—and it would seem, that he made a bad business of it at last. Though sensible of its evils, he incorporated it with the law of the church, and thus made it a part of the religion of God's children!

The inconsistency which he ascribes to Moses, does not surprise us.

through the writings of the Roman Catholics up to the commencement of the slave trade, and no farther. We find it in the Bamberg synopsis. The authors of this work were full blooded papists. They tell us, that John Calvin was a liar and blasphemer. Yet there appears to be a brotherly union of sentiment, so far as slavery is concerned, between them and protestant writers, on the same side. They insist that a man's servants or slaves, under the Jewish law, were his property; and direct us to *Aristotle on Ethics*, for proof.* In their exposition of the command to Abraham, to circumcise his bought servants, they take it for granted that they were pagan slaves, and give a very religious reason for the circumcision of such filthy beings. "Thus the whole family of Abraham were dedicated to God, and the worship of God, and faith, and salvation, propagated to many, if not in love and freely, at least by fear and coercion—for that was an age and a law not of sons but of servants." The truth is, this notion of the Jews being authorized to circumcise pagan slaves, is one of the foul slanders on the old testament, by which papists endeavored to sustain the Pope in making the slave trade a divine institution. To reconcile protestants and the world, to a business so diabolical as that of making property of human beings, they represented it as a very pious affair, from which great good would accrue to the souls of the poor heathen. They would have us believe that it originated in heaven. It is remarkable that, for many years, they never thought of making slaves of any but pagans. But, at length, some of the enslaved Africans were converted. There was no difficulty in retaining the converts themselves in bondage. They were relieved by this sage remark—*Christianity was not intended to change the civil relations of men*. But the question was, how could their children be held in slavery? The Bamberg synopsis removes the whole difficulty, by the profound maxim—"the birth follows the belly!"

The fact is worthy of particular notice, that the principle of making slaves of captives taken in war, never was applicable to any other purpose than defence of the slave trade. The writings of papists since the commencement of that iniquity, are full of it; and it more frequently occurs in expositions of the Bible by protestants, than any other mode of making slaves. Let no one say, that it is because that principle so frequently occurs in the scriptures. We hope to shew, in the proper place, that notwithstanding the efforts that have been made for three hundred years past, the most capable of the apologists for slavery, have not been able to lay their fingers on a single text, which looks like a warrant for dooming captives to slavery. Besides, they bring forward this principle, when it contradicts the very letter of the text they are expounding. We could name more than one protestant divine of eminence, who expound the permission (Lev. xxv. 44.) to buy bondmen of the heathen, by bringing forward *slavery by captivity*. They also mention it as a probability, that Abraham obtained his servants by captivity; though Moses says expressly, that he bought them with money. Such writers, whether they know it or not, are just imitating papists who wrote after the commencement of the slave trade. Arguments to support the principle of making slaves of pagan

*It is remarkable that they never quote, in support of slavery, any christian who lived prior to the slave trade.

captives, were then in great demand. Any one could see, that unless it could be proved that there was a divine warrant for enslaving the Africans, by making war upon them in their own country, all who captured them, and all who bought and sold them, and all who seized their offspring, deserved, in the sight of both God and man, to be put to death. Accordingly, when popish authors approached the principle of *slavery by captivity*, they mustered all their force. They saw that on their success or failure there depended the life or death of the whole slave question. They introduce this principle again and again, and dwell on it. Protestant divines, who profess to hate the slave trade, do the same thing from mere imitation, and because they really do not know what they are about. It would be diverting, if it excited no pity, nor indignation, to witness the mysterious and awful solemnity with which they approach this subject—*slavery by captivity*. Mr. Horne, with perfect gravity, remarks—*this is supposed to have been the first origin of slavery*. It was certainly the first. People had first to catch their neighbours, then sell them, then seize their offspring.

It ought, likewise, never to be lost sight of, that the slave trade was originally, zealously defended as authorized by the scriptures, by those who defended slave holding as scriptural. This is so far from needing proof, that it is a mere truism. How could any man believe that the Bible authorized him to hold the Africans in slavery, unless he also believed that it authorized him to catch them. Those who defend the one, and condemn the other, do not know what they are doing. It is true, that in the present day, with more than enough of slaves on hands, and with the horrors of St. Domingo, and the scenes of Southampton before our eyes, it not only costs us nothing, but it sorts with our worldly interest, to hate and denounce the slave trade. But in the days of our great grandfathers, when an increase of slaves appeared likely to increase their wealth, there was consistency on this subject. Papists and protestants avowed and defended it as their faith, that those who captured and transported the Africans, and those who bought and sold them, and those who seized their offspring in the cradle, were sailing under the same flag, and had the same charter for their trade. They were careful, in their expositions of the scriptures, to lay down principles which would cover every branch of the concern. They were particular in pointing out three ways, in which a christian might righteously enslave a pagan.

1. *By captivity*. If a pagan was conquered in battle by a christian, he forfeited his liberty forever. He was justly, in the sight of God, the slave of the captor. This was the encouragement for christians to enlist in the slave trade, and in slave making wars.

2. *By purchase*. A pagan forever lost his freedom by being bought, no matter who sold him. This was the encouragement to repair to the coast when the slave ship arrived, and buy and sell the cargo from one to another.

3. *By birth*. A child forfeited its liberty simply by being born, provided its mother was a slave. This was the warrant for kidnapping all the infants born during the middle passage, and after the arrival at the plantations.

Within the recollection of many now living, professed christians could appeal to the Bible, with equal solemnity, for the justification of the slave

trade and slave holding. When it was heard that the ship had arrived with another fine cargo of bodies from Africa, the planter would hurry to the coast. He would select a body not too much damaged by the passage, and one that was likely to outlive the grief of separation from kindred and country; and at the moment of counting down the money to the captain, he would quiet his conscience by quoting his text, and the captain would quote it too; and they would smile on each other, and both agree that it was excellent proof. But at length we discovered, that we had slaves enough on hands, and rather more than enough. Any increase would crowd us too much, and endanger our lives. We therefore resolved, that if any man should bring us any more, we would hang him. It might have been expected of slave makers, that they would defend their partners with the Bible while they needed them—and hand them over to the gallows as soon as they could do without them.

In a late popular work, the author has inserted, in his views of the Jewish law, the doctrine of the perpetual slavery of captive strangers—but he has omitted the proof. Probably the doctrine itself, will be left out of the next edition. We do not now need it, having abandoned the slave trade. It would be a gratuitous and very awkward business, for divines to be torturing texts to justify that which we have pronounced a sin, punishable with death. The business of all who volunteer in favour of slavery in future will be, to prove that there is no sin in holding the few we have on hands; or, that all who are bought with our money, are our lawful property; and, that all men are born slaves, whose predecessors had the misfortune to fall into the hands of those thieves whom we have resolved to hang for their villany.

It accords with the selfishness and cruelty of the slave holding spirit, that, when you entreat a slave holder to *break the yoke*, and let the oppressed go free, he talks of the loss he would sustain, and insists that the community must indemnify him. Yet it would move his indignation, were every villain in the United States to talk of bringing in his bill, and drawing on the public treasury, for the damages he would sustain by becoming an honest man. He himself never would brook the idea of a pension for those who were thrown out of employment, by the abolition of the slave trade. This is the more inconsistent, as we had been in the habit of paying them for the Africans they brought us, and of assuring them from the Bible, that they were engaged in a lawful calling.

II. *The most able advocates for slavery, have failed in their appeals to the Scriptures.*

We have said, that those divines, who in their expositions of the scriptures, talk so much about involuntary, hereditary, or perpetual slavery, and especially slavery by captivity, being scriptural, are imitating popish writers, and do not know what they are about. We are sure this will be pronounced censorious and false. We shall be told, that it was the overwhelming evidence of scripture, which produced the conviction, in the minds of those great and good men, that slavery, in all its forms, was a divine institution. Let us then examine the overwhelming evidence. We cannot notice all the texts we have heard quoted. At present, we can only examine those adduced by some one of the most capable and popu-

lar authors. We cannot think of a more fair selection than Mr. Horne. He has devoted a chapter of seven pages to the subject of *slaves and servants*; and has occupied one section with pointing out the various ways in which slaves might be obtained; and has carefully noted down the scripture proof. He has availed himself of all the discoveries of papists on this subject, as is evident from the manner in which he has retailed their ideas. He has had all the help to be obtained from protestant writers. Besides, he has studied the Bible himself. He has published four large volumes for the assistance of young men "in the critical study and knowledge of the scriptures." So high is the estimation in which his works are held, that they have been adopted as text books in Colleges and Theological Seminaries. Where he has failed, it is not probable that any man has succeeded. We must add, however, that it would be doing Mr. Horne great injustice, in our humble opinion, to judge of the rest of his writings from what he has written in defence of slavery.

We cannot but notice, briefly, in this place, the general character of this chapter, with that of the notes on slavery. God is not once distinctly recognized as the author of the law given at Sinai. Treading in the footsteps of Jahn and other papists, he represents Moses as hating slavery, yet incorporating it with the religion of the church, from motives of expediency. We are told, that Antediluvians, and Patriarchs, and Israelites, and Greeks, and Romans, and Turks, were slave holders. The Israelites had five different ways of depriving their neighbors of their freedom. But we are assured, that slavery among them was generally mild and salutary, both to the body and soul. He tells us, "it cannot be denied, that the situation of slaves was much more tolerable among the Hebrews, than among other nations, especially the Greeks and Romans." From which, it is presumed, we may infer, that the religion of the former was more tolerable than that of the latter. Yet even *that* ought to be proved, if we must believe that Moses made it, and bottomed it on the Jesuitical principle, that sin and holiness are mere matters of expediency. He gives us a pleasing account of the spirit of the Ottoman empire, where "rich people, when childless, purchased young slaves, to educate them in their own faith, and sometimes adopted them for their own children, and where slaves sometimes attained to the highest honors. [Dr. Priestly, who was a warm admirer of Mahomet, and wrote a large volume for the purpose of exhibiting the beauties of Mahometanism, in contrast with christianity, would have been charmed to see his favorite so fairly eclipse Moses.] He likewise notices Joseph and Daniel, as instances of Hebrew slaves, out of their own country, becoming vice-roys and governors. He mentions, also, one instance, to shew that slaves had, sometimes, similar good fortune in the holy land. But our young men in the Seminaries, must not think that the Hebrews were the most devilish people in the world. He shews that the Greeks and Romans were worse. Among them, "slaves were held, for no men, for dead men, for beasts—nay, were in a much worse state than any cattle whatever." He exhibits the masters as scourging and cruelly torturing them, for the slightest and most trivial offences—branding them with branding irons in their hands and foreheads, to keep them from running away—and, when exasperated by any real or apprehended injury, nailing them to the cross, and making them die a linger-

ing and most miserable death! We once found some difficulty in believing the account, given by a traveller, of the imagery of a certain church in Europe. The pulpit was hung round with the pictures of saints; and among others were to be seen, in bold relief, St. Balaam, and the animal that rebuked his madness. But the sight of such a group of saints, would have as harmless an effect on the devotion of a congregation, as the sight of such a collection of slave holders would have on the morals of our youth, in Colleges and Theological Seminaries.

In the following section, he points out five ways in which the Jews were authorized to turn their neighbors into property. Surely they must have been a rich people.

"Slaves were acquired by various ways, viz: 1. By captivity, which is supposed to have been the first origin of slavery. (Gen. xiv. 14. Deut. xx. 14, and xxi. 10—11.) 2. By debt, when persons being poor, were sold for payment of their debts. (2 Kings, iv. 1. Matt. xxviii. 25.) 3. By committing theft, without the power of making restitution: (Ex. xxii. 23. Neh. v. 4—5.) And 4th. By birth, when persons were born of married slaves. These are termed born in the house, [Gen. xiv. 14. and xv. 3. and xvii. 23. and xxi. 10.] home born; [Jer. ii. 14.] and the children and sons of handmaids. [Ps. lxxxvi. 16. and cxvi. 16]"

We can say sincerely and truly, that we have never seen a more pertinent collection of texts to prove the lawfulness of slave holding. We have noticed carefully, for about seven years, the appeals to the Bible on this subject. The result has been a settled conviction, that every attempt to use the word of God in defence of involuntary, hereditary, and perpetual slavery, must lead to nonsense, or heresy, or infidelity. It is the arrangement of heaven, that no man can speak truth and good sense, in attempting to make God's will the abettor of any gross sin. The thing to be proved being unreasonable and wicked, every argument and mode of reasoning which can be enlisted for its support, must be of a kindred spirit. That Mr. Horne, with all his talents and acquirements, and means of information, has not been more successful than others on the same side of the question, will, we think, appear from an analysis of his proofs.

1. "*By captivity.*" The first text quoted, is Gen. xiv. 14. *And when Abraham heard that his brother Lot was taken captive, he armed his trained servants, born in his house, three hundred and eighteen, and pursued them to Dan.* We have too much respect for Mr. Horne's understanding, to suppose, that the circumstance of these young men having been born in his house, is referred to as proof, that Abraham made them slaves by captivity. Nor must we suppose that he quotes this text, as proof that their parents were made slaves by captivity. He contends that there were four other ways of slave making. Besides, it appears from the testimony of Moses, (Gen. xvii. 13.) that the patriarch bought his servants with money. It is evident that Lot being taken captive by the enemy whom Abraham was about to pursue, is the point referred to. This is the proof that God's people, in old times, with his approbation, made slaves of captives! In the same way he might have proved, that Abraham and his household were *wicked, and sinners before the Lord exceedingly*; for by turning to Gen. xiii. 13. he would have found this charge brought against the men of Sodom. But this plan of charging on the church of

God the wickedness of her neighbors, is not original. It is precisely the course which infidels have been pursuing, time out of mind. The apologists for slavery, are certainly not chargeable with being *over nice* about precedents. Sometimes they plead that pagans, among the Greeks and Romans, had slaves. Sometimes they remind us, that "the great whore" (Rev. xviii. 13.) traded in slaves and souls of men. And Mr. Horne brings forward the example of those invaders whom Abraham chastised. Such an argument reminds us of one which was frequently used by some hard faced professors, at the commencement of the present war with intemperance. They often quoted the example of Nabal, and the Levite, and Beahadad and others, who were distinguished for nothing but drunkenness and meanness, to prove that the scriptures allow a christian to drink *till his heart is merry*.

Another text adduced as proof, that making slaves of captives was agreeable to the law of God is, [Deut. xx. 14.] where direction is given to the Jewish armies, in cases where the warriors in a besieged city were to be cut off. *But the women and the little ones, and the cattle, and all that is in the city, even all the spoil thereof, shalt thou take unto thyself; and thou shalt eat the spoil of thine enemies, which the Lord thy God hath given thee.* Here is truly an affecting spectacle—a city, in which every wife is a widow, and every child is fatherless. What shall be done with them? The Genius of Slavery, says—make slaves of them and their offspring forever. Make them work all their lives without wages, or sell them, and live on the proceeds. Slave holders contend that this is the spirit, if not the letter of the statute. We attempt in vain, to ascertain by what process they would make this appear. Perhaps they infer it from the fact, that the Israelites are allowed to eat the spoil, and take the captives home. Still this will not make them slaves, unless it be assumed that the holy land was one of those regions where starvation or slavery were the only alternatives for the widow and her fatherless child. But this would betray gross ignorance of the Jewish law. Who does not know, that a tythe was collected every third year, to support strangers and widows, and fatherless children, as well as Levites; and that the law secured to them a share in every harvest and every vintage, besides the privilege of stepping into any man's field or vineyard, to eat when hungry? Perhaps they build their argument on the assumption that, in the text, the women and little ones are reckoned as part of the spoil. If there were christian cannibals in the world, they would insist that this is correct; and if they succeeded in proving it, slave holders would be left in the lurch. The text would then be neither more nor less, than a command to eat the captives; and the slave holder would not have even the privilege of "snacks," unless he would quit the trade of man stealer, and turn man eater. We cannot guess how they work the passage into a proof of slavery, by captivity. We feel pretty confident, that Mr. Horne does not know, and that he never enquired. He saw it quoted by Jahn and other Roman Catholics; and he faithfully copied it, as he has most of his other ideas on slavery. A moment's attention to the Jewish law, will settle this matter. The following quotation, shews that the soldier who would seize the women and little ones to doom them to slavery, must do it with the lightnings of Sinai flashing in his face. *Ye shall not afflict any widow or*

fatherless child. If thou afflict them in any wise, and they cry at all unto me, I will surely hear their cry, and my wrath shall wax hot, and I will kill you with the sword; and your wives shall be widows, and your children fatherless. Ex. xxii. 22—24.

Mr. Horne likewise quotes Deut. xxi. 10—11. where permission is given to Israelitish soldiers not to enslave, but to marry any of the captives to whom they might have a desire—especially if they saw among them a beautiful woman. This would be a pertinent quotation to justify the selection of a beautiful captive as a companion for life. But how any man could imagine that it would justify the enslaving of captives, is the mystery.

2. "*By debt, when persons being poor, were sold for payment of their debts.* Matt. xviii. 25. 2 Kings, iv. 1. It seems he would have us believe, that in the holy land the divine law left no alternative for the unfortunate debtor, but the horrors of slavery. This is not all. They tell us, that the children of slaves were doomed to a life of bondage. Can any man think of a land where such is the poor man's fate, without associating the idea of a region beyond the reach of mercy? We confess that such a law would perfectly comport with the theory of the Israelites being furnished with five ways of turning their neighbors into cash. Indeed it would seem reasonable, that a man who, with so many facilities for making money, could not pay his honest debts, should be severely punished. Still we would expect some saving clause in favour of those who were too old or infirm to chase their neighbors, or conquer them in battle. But let us hear our author's proof. He quotes Matt. xviii. 25. where the kingdom of heaven is compared to a certain king who, when his debtor had nothing to pay, *commanded him to be sold, and his wife and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made.* To work this text into a proof that the law of Moses allowed poor debtors to be sold, it is evidently assumed that those things to which allusion is made by inspired writers, for the illustration of truth and duty, must be such as the law approved. Let us apply this principle. When allusion is made to the unjust steward, or to a judge who *feared not God, neither regarded man*, it shews that the law given at Sinai required stewards to be unjust, and judges neither to fear God nor regard man!

But perhaps Mr. Horne is more happy in his reference to 2 Kings, iv. 1. We here enter our solemn protest against all attempts to fix the meaning of the law, by appeals to the practice or wickedness of the church, or to any thing else than the law itself. But it is an outrage on the feelings of every sober reader of the bible, to bring forward the morals of the ten tribes in the days of Ahab and Jezebel, as a sample of the morality of God's covenant at Sinai. Let us examine the text. *Now there cried a certain woman of the wives of the sons of the prophets, unto Elisha, saying, thy servant, my husband, is dead; and the creditor is come to take unto him my two sons to be bondmen.* The simple fact of her husband fearing the Lord, would account to Elisha for his being poor, and dying in debt. Jeroboam, to perfect his schism, had removed the Levites from the priesthood, and put in their room those who would be more convenient tools in wickedness. Under the influence of the same spirit, Ahab and Jezebel had driven every son of the prophets from his post, and compelled

them to hide *in dens and caves of the earth*. The result was, this woman's husband had died poor, and in debt; and in the spirit of the times, the creditor is come to seize her children for bondmen. A reference to such a state of things, makes us feel as Gen. Eaton did, when he saw a gallows erected at the door of a Turk to hang his little son, because the father was too poor to pay his tax. He exclaimed, "God, I thank thee that my children are Americans." But, it seems, an apologist for slave holding is made of sterner stuff. This is not the first time we have seen this state of things referred to, in justification of slavery: nor is it the first time we have seen it brought forward as a sample of the morality of the Sinai covenant. According to Mr. Horne's reasoning, the Jewish law required that if any prophet, or son of the prophets, manifested any fear of the Lord, he was to be driven from his post; and if, in consequence, he died insolvent, his fatherless children were to be plucked from their widowed mother, and sold for bondmen. It does appear, that the faculties of a giant will become spell-bound, the moment he turns advocate for slavery. If Jeroboam, in his efforts to wean the ten tribes from the altar at Jerusalem, could have found a prophet willing to give such an interpretation of the law which regulated religion there, he would have made him Prime Minister. Jezebel would have fed such a man at her own table.

We here assert, fearless of contradiction by any unbiassed reader of the Bible, that except the permission common to Jewish and Christian parents in all countries, to sell (in the scriptural sense of the word,) or indent their children, or wards, during minority, for a term of six years, there is not a statute in all the Jewish law which authorized one man to sell another. In every case, the person sold is himself the seller. Perhaps the following may be considered an exception.

3. "*By committing theft without the power of making restitution. Ex. xxii. 23. Neh. v. 4—5.*" It appears that a thief was to make restitution: *if he have nothing, then he shall be sold for his theft*. Nothing is said about the duration of his servitude; that probably depended on the time necessary to make restitution. Ex. xxii. 23. is an unfortunate text for the slave holder. It establishes two facts. 1. That the lawgiver considered liberty the natural right of man—to be forfeited by crime in a specified case only. 2. That to appropriate to our own use that which is our neighbours—in other words, to steal, was a sin, to be punished by the judges. But the text is here quoted, to prove, that to appropriate to their own use, by force or fraud, the person and services, and just wages of their neighbors, was a practice licensed by the God of Heaven. He might, with equal propriety, have undertaken to prove, that they were allowed to murder one another, by appealing to the statute which required the magistrate to put the murderer to death.

We suspect the printer must have put Neh. v. 4—5. under the wrong head. But it does no honour to a theologian, to quote it any where in justification of slavery, or as a sample of the purity of a divine law. It is an appeal to the conduct of some scandalous professors. On reference to the passage, it appears that complaint had been made by some Jews against brethren who, taking advantage of their circumstances, had exacted usury, and compelled them to *bring in bondage their sons and daughters*. Nehemiah tells us, *I was very angry when I heard their cry, and*

these words: He rebuked the nobles and rulers, and set a great assembly against them. He shamed them, by reminding them of the reproach of the heathen, their enemies; and they held their peace, and had nothing to answer. He then called the priests, and took an oath of them, that they would cease from their wickedness, and make restitution. Also, I shook my lap and said, so God shake out every man from his house, and from his labour, that performeth not this promise; even thus he be shaken out and emptied. And all the congregation said, Amen, and praised the Lord. And the people did according to this promise. All that we can gather from this passage is, that in the days of Nehemiah, some members of the church had sinned, by bringing their fellow men into bondage of some kind; and Nehemiah, by faithful dealing, and threatening them with excommunication, brought them to repentance, and a solemn promise of amendment. How this proves that slave holding was not sinful, but agreeable to the law of God, we cannot see. Are "all those sins for which discipline has been exercised, to be classed with christian virtues?"

4. *By birth, when persons were born of married slaves. These are termed born in the house.* Gen. xiv. 14 and 15; iii. and 17—23: and xxi. 10." We shall make no remarks on Gen. xiv. 14. at present; as we intend to notice it particularly in the history of Abraham.

The second text quoted in support of slavery by birth, is Gen. xv. 3. "And Abraham said, behold to me thou hast given no seed; and lo, one born in my house is mine heir." We shall notice this text also, again. At present we remark, that Mr. Horne knows, that the phrase "one born in my house," is not the one so translated in the other texts quoted. He knows that it is literally rendered "a son of my house." It is the same which is translated (Eccles. ii. 7.) "servants born in my house." It seems that in these piping times for slavery, we cannot have even a Hebrew Grammar, without a hint in its favour. Professor Stuart, to enable us to understand a note in Syntax, quotes Eccles. ii. 7. and lets us know that the proper translation is, *I had slaves*. We once heard the phrase, *a son of the house*, quoted in conversation, as an argument for slavery; and to make it satisfactory, we were assured that it is an *idiom*. There is a wonderful charm in a learned term. A schoolmaster once quieted the fears of a whole neighborhood, respecting a great light in the north, by informing them that it was a *phenomenon*. Does "a son of the house," really mean one born in the house, and tied to it as a slave? Does "a son of thunder," mean one born in a thunder storm? We think the phrase in question, means one who is devoted to some service in, or oversight of, the house. Where he drew his first breath, or on what terms he serves, would be another question. So Abraham explains it in reference to Eleazer. He speaks of him as his steward, and as the probable heir of his estate. We shall have but little to say against the condition of the Africans in the United States, when we see them exalted to the station of stewards; and, next to the sons, the heirs of their master's wealth.

We think [Gen. xvii. 23.] if it proves any thing, will prove too much for Mr. Horne. "Abraham took Ishmael his son, and all that were born in his house, and all that were bought with his money, every male among the men of his house, and circumcised, &c." Abraham did so, because God had commanded him to circumcise not only his servants, but *all born*

in his house. In this last clause, every Jew found the warrant to circumcise his children. But if it means persons born slaves, it will appear that under the old testament, none had a right to circumcision but servants, and those who were born slaves.

But the most pleasant quotation of all, is Gen. xxi. 10. "Wherefore she said unto Abraham, cast out this bondwoman and her son; for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son even Isaac." It would please us exceedingly, if all slave holders in the United States would exercise this kind of discipline, when their slaves become saucy—turn them out, and deny them the privilege of serving any longer. It is in this way they manage saucy servants in Britain and Ohio. There would be no necessity in this country, of taking measures to disinherit them.

To prove that children of married slaves, were slaves also, he quotes Jer. ii. 14. "Is Israel a servant? is he a home born slave?" Here our translators have inserted the word slave, and have changed the meaning of the text, in attempting to make it plain. The phrase, "a home born slave" is, in the original, the same which in other places is rendered, simply, "born in the house." The allusion is to the command to Abraham to circumcise his bought servants, and all born in his house. The spirit of the text is this: Is Israel in covenant with God? Has he been admitted to the seal of the righteousness of faith? Why then is he spoiled? The text has no allusion to slaves.

But we do not recollect of ever seeing a more disgusting effort, than his attempt to draw an argument in favour of slavery, from the phrase, "sons or children of handmaids." The texts are, Psalms lxxxvi. 16. "O turn unto me and have mercy; give strength to thy servant, and save the son of thy handmaid." Again, Psalms cxvi. 16. "O Lord, truly I am thy servant," &c. Here, it appears, David acknowledges that his mother was the Lord's handmaid; therefore," &c. &c. &c. When we see such a man as Mr. Horne, chained to the slave holding system, and prostituting his fine talents, and perverting the word of God to its defence, it makes one feel as Jeremiah did, when he exclaimed, "My bowels, my bowels! I am pained to the very heart." From infancy we have been accustomed to hear such texts quoted, in justification of slavery. To make them satisfactory, we were assured that it was the opinion of the most approved divines, that it is not sinful. It appears, however, that an *approved divine* does not, necessarily, mean one who found his faith in the bible, or proves it from the bible. It does not, necessarily, mean any thing more than one who, by reading Jahn, and Markii Medulla, and Turretine, and Ridgely, &c. &c. has acquired a complete set or system of notions. One of these approved divines, can tell you in five minutes what the doctrine of the bible is, on any subject you can name, without the trouble of looking at a bible. He has only to turn to his system; and, if he there finds the doctrine in question, or a loop to hang it on, he will assure you it is the doctrine of the bible—for it accords with the sentiments of the most approved divines. Thus these approved divines, keep us in the horn book, on the subject of slavery, and many other important subjects,

It is easy to conceive how Papists could be satisfied with such bible proofs as those which we have just noticed. As we said before, shyness of

the bible is part of their religion. Besides, any deficiency of texts, would be more than made up by the authority of the Pope, who never makes mistakes, excepting when he runs foul of some of his own infallible decisions. Nor is it hard to imagine how Protestants are so easily satisfied. The truth is, we received the slave trade and slavery, with the doctrine that they are divine institutions, and the texts to prove it, from the hands of Papists, without examination. Besides, when men have once commenced the indulgence of their lusts with any gross sin, they are not apt to be nice about the scripture proof.

III. *Slavery has polluted our churches, and its removal is necessary to save them from ruin.*

I. AFRICAN SLAVERY HAS BROUGHT WITH IT INTO PROTESTANT CHURCHES, A NUMBER OF THE FILTHIEST OF THE POPISH MAXIMS, AND HAS GIVEN BIRTH TO OTHERS WHICH A PAPIST WOULD BE ASHAMED OF. Our children, from the time they are capable of learning any thing, are familiar with *pious frauds*, and the maxim, "the end sanctifies the deed." They hear such things, in some form, from every slave holder who attempts to defend his conduct. The very spirit and sum of his defence are, the evils he is averting from his country, and the Africans, and his own family, and himself, and the good he is doing on all hands, by holding his fellow men in bondage.

"The Lord does not expect sinners to repent, provided it would be accompanied with great inconvenience or expense." What else does that man say, who acknowledges slavery to be sinful in principle, and perhaps expresses his fears that, if persevered in, it will bring ruin on his country—yet excuses himself, by bringing forward a host of difficulties which would follow emancipation. According to this man's morality, every old sinner may hold on in his wickedness, and he will grow innocent as he grows grey; for reformation from any old sin must be difficult, and the difficulty daily increases, and it may be very expensive when there is occasion for restitution. Nay, it would seem, that Martyrs, who parted with life rather than sin against God, may have been well meaning people, but had very little wisdom. The truth is, that slave holders who use such an apology, are just doing as every man once did, who has gone to hell from under the light of the gospel. They are going on in sin, and quieting their consciences with resolutions to repent when they shall come to the convenient place.

"The Lord does not require sinners to repent at all, provided they will give up their wicked practices." Few persons undertake to talk about the sin of slave holding, without hearing the retort, "You had better be preaching in favour of the Colonization Society, than be raising disturbance, by telling us of our sin, and insisting on repentance." Yet, on every other subject, they will acknowledge and contend for it as an article of their faith, that no reformation without repentance will avert the divine displeasure.

"The Africans are too depraved and wicked to enjoy freedom in this country." If we may believe slave holders, they are lazy thieves, liars, swearers, sabbath breakers, drunkards, and murderers. Yet they would make useful missionaries. All that is wanting in Liberia, is an increase of their number, to evangelize Africa.

The name of penances and indulgences, is odious among protestants. But it is only the name that is universally hated. Many a slave holder has cleared scores with his conscience, both for the past and future, by a contribution to a Colonization Society. From the moment some men put down their names as annual contributors, to some project for getting rid of slavery without much inconvenience, you cannot reach their consciences. Every entreaty to break off their sin, by repentance and works of righteousness, will be answered with the plea, that they are assisting the colonization cause. Some take a cheaper course still. They call up their ignorant slaves, and propose the alternative of ending their days in slavery, or being torn from their families and friends, and put ashore on the coast of Africa. In most cases, from love of kindred and country, and ignorance of Liberia, and want of confidence in the statements of white people, they will prefer to die in their present condition. From that moment, the master feels no remorse. As long as he lives, he will recur to this circumstance for comfort, in moments of disquietude. Perhaps he will put it in the newspapers as a *triumphant refutation* of all the arguments against slave holding, and as proof that emancipators are disturbers of the peace. Such a man can obtain indulgences cheaper than ever Tetzel sold them.

"There is no sin in slave holding, if we do not sell our slaves." The contempt of some slave holders for a negro trader, is equalled only by the self-complacency which they feel when they mention that they never sold a human being, excepting, perhaps, some wicked ones. The amount of it at least is, they have had all the guilt and profits of the sin to themselves. They forget, however, the influence of their example on their children. They forget that they may be obliged to sell their slaves, should they be involved in debt; and that by dying slave holders, they will put it in the power of another to do it, before they are cold in their graves. We seldom hear of a more melancholy circumstance, than that of a professor of religion on his death bed, calling some of his neighbors to his bed side to bear witness, that though he owns slaves, he never sold one. Why does he not call some one to bear witness, that he never sold horses? He has too much sense. He knows that there is as much religion in selling property as in holding it in our own hands. But in prospect of the judgment, his fears are roused by the recollection, that he has *turned aside the stranger from his rights*, and, like a drowning man, he catches at a straw.

"There is no sin in holding slaves, provided we use them well." It is a very common opinion, that the *manner* in which we transgress God's law and injure our neighbours, is to decide whether it be sinful. Lord Chesterfield is not alone in the opinion, that in many cases *the manner* is every thing. The bold highwayman takes his stand by the road side with considerable self-complacency, when he reflects with contempt on the chicken-hearted creatures who steal in the dark, when people are asleep. The latter, in the mean time, blesses himself when he remembers, that he never endangered any body's life by his calling. We have drunkards too, who get drunk moderately and decently. Nobody sees them lounging in the filthy grocery, or lying about the still-house. It is remarkable that every man, in every branch of the enslaving concern, approves his own

way, and condemns his neighbour's. Those monsters who spend their days in prowling around the shores of Africa, keep up their spirits, and cheer each other over their cans, by cursing the hypocrites who, in christian countries, with their bibles in their hands, can steal little infants in their cradles. The great man on the slave farm, when going the round of his traps in the morning, to see how many infants have been caught since sun down, will mention it as a consoling reflection, that we have passed a law to hang those wicked men, who seize and enslave the poor unoffending Africans in their own country. Those who have learned not to build their hopes entirely on the wickedness of their neighbours, and are taking no measures to increase the number of their slaves, have other ways of managing their consciences. It is sometimes serious work, when they look round on the widows and orphans on whose tears they are thriving. But they remember what those amiable divines, the Jesuits, have told us, of the embarrassment of Moses on this subject, and the prudent course pursued by the apostles—and then the reflection, "I use my slaves well," puts every thing right. There is a wonderful charm in this apology. It seems the highest judicatories of some of the most respectable churches, have felt its wizzard influence. They utterly refuse to recommend the exercise of discipline, for cleansing the sanctuary; yet they know, that no church, composed in part of nominal professors, ever was cleansed from an old sin without the exercise of discipline. As a substitute, they condemn the principle, and then give some grave direction about the practice; noticing, particularly, feeding and clothing, and good usage. Thus the people take up the idea that, after all, sin, when properly regulated, is *not so bad a thing* as some weak professors are apt to suppose. We have heard this apology, "I use my slaves well," more frequently than any other. Probably there is not a slaveholder on earth, who does not use it. Some of them are so well pleased with it, that they use no other. We sometimes hear it in circumstances rather unfavorable to gravity. A few years ago, a respectable southern slave holder, at a certain meeting in Philadelphia, undertook to cure a few of his backwoods brethren of their opposition to slave holding. His argument consisted wholly of a detail of his mild treatment of black people. It must be confessed, that his hearers were not capable of doing him justice; for, unfortunately, in a little while, he became so affected with a sense of his goodness to the poor black wretches, that it choked his utterance. We have heard this apology from men whose slaves were in another state, in the hands of overseers, of whose treatment they knew nothing, and could know nothing, except as the overseers were pleased to inform them by letter. In some of our slave states, they are so much in the habit of defending themselves by asserting that their slaves would not have their freedom as a gift, that they frequently make the same assertion, in the state of Ohio, when in pursuit of runaways.

"It is neither necessary nor proper for common people to read the scriptures." This maxim is enforced by severe penalties in many of our slave states, and warmly advocated by many professed christians, so far as coloured people are concerned. It is a remarkable fact, that with all the opposition of Protestants and Papists to each other, they can shake hands over the work of stripping the Africans of their freedom, or depriving them

of the means of salvation. This is not singular. The Pharisees and Sadducees were sworn enemies, but there was one cause which always united them.

"Some things, sinful in principle, are christian in practice; in other words, it is christian-like to practise sin." This is avowed by multitudes of slaveholders. They seem to want language to express their hatred of the principle of slavery. But they frequently get relief by the sweeping assertion, that it is the greatest curse ever permitted to light on any nation. But with the same breath, they will justify their practice by appealing to the history of Abraham, or the law of Moses, or the writings of the Apostles. For ourselves, we must say, that we do not know a worse heresy. Nor do we believe that the boldest infidel ever said a more malignant thing against God or the bible, than this charge of his having licensed things sinful in principle, and ruinous in their effects. We all look with horror at the impudence of our apostate father, when he attempts to throw the blame of his rebellion on his maker, by telling him to his face—"the woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat." But some men can incorporate with their theology that which, in the first rebel, was the mere raving of despair.

The history of the Jesuits does not furnish more contemptible trimmers than those christians would be, who would copy the spirit and conduct ascribed by Papists to Moses, at the giving of the covenant at Sinai. What character more infamous than that of the minister, who graduates the purity of his gospel and his life, by the state of morals in his congregation and neighborhood. How far ministers fall under this censure who have become slaveholders, and by their example teach others to be slaveholders, and in the mean time whine about their consciences and their hatred of slavery, and their unfortunate situation, we leave themselves to judge. How they feel when they look round on the strangers, and widows, and fatherless children, on whose misery they are thriving, we do not know, and we never wish to know by experience. If they do at all reflect seriously on the day of retribution, and the doom of the oppressor, they must have feelings which no one can envy. One thing we do know. To say that the word of God will bear them through, and that they are pursuing the course marked out by Moses and the Apostles, and Jesus Christ, is adding blasphemy to iniquity. You may ascribe it to weakness, if you please—but, when we hear men charge God with legalizing, in his word, the practice of any thing which is, in principle, a sin, it makes us think of those who *fret themselves, and curse their king and their God, and look upward*. The morality of our churches, under the influence of the slave holding spirit, is becoming rotten to the core.

2. THAT OUR SLAVE HOLDING CHURCHES ARE POLLUTED, AND MUST BE CLEANSED, IF THEY WOULD ESCAPE DESTRUCTION, APPEARS FROM THE TYPE OF THE LEPROUS HOUSE. Lev. xiv. 33—53. Many of the truths of the gospel, are exhibited in the old testament in types and shadows. It is scarcely necessary to say, that God is as true to threatenings and promises, and predictions, thus delivered, as to any others. In this way that prediction was delivered, which was fulfilled at the Saviour's crucifixion—*a bone of him shall not be broken*. Moses, in his farewell address, charges Israel—"Take heed in the plague of leprosy, that thou ob-

serve diligently, and do according to all that the Priests and Levites shall teach you; as I commanded them, so ye shall do. Remember what the Lord thy God did unto Miriam by the way, after that ye were come forth out of Egypt." Deut. xxiv. 8. 9. Miriam murmured against Moses, because of the Ethiopian woman whom he had married, and refused to submit to him as a prophet. For this sin, she was smitten with leprosy, and became white as snow, and was shut out of the camp as unclean, seven days. All the directions respecting this plague, and the way of cleansing, were intended to shew the evil nature and effects of sin--and to point out the only way of salvation.

But among the Israelites, houses, as well as persons, were visited with leprosy. They seem to have been extraordinary plagues, so far as regards houses, peculiar to that people; and appear to have been intended as types of a polluted church. Let us examine Lev. xiv. 33—53: "If hollow streaks, greenish or reddish, lower than the wall," were seen in the walls of the house, the priest was to shut it up seven days. On the seventh day, if the plague were spread in the walls, the stones were to be removed, and the house *scraped within round about*, and the dust and stones carried to an unclean place without the city. If after the house was repaired and plastered, the plague was still visible, the priest was to pronounce it "a fretting leprosy"—it was past cure. The whole establishment was to be broken down, and all the materials carried out of the city to a place devoted to the reception of filth. But even where the leprosy did not prove to be of the *fretting* kind, he that entered it from the time it was first shut up, was to be considered unclean *till even*. He that had eaten or lain in the house was to *wash his clothes*. An atonement was to be made for the house. It must be cleansed with blood and cedar wood, and scarlet, and hyssop. Applying the instructions of this type to a church polluted with slave holding, we learn the following particulars.

1. EVERY THING IN A SLAVE HOLDING CHURCH IS DEFILED. We sometimes hear men who, from their birth, have been eating and sleeping in a slave holding church, assert that they never were polluted, mentally or otherwise, with this sin. They might be sincere—but it could not be true. There is, indeed, a cleansing provided; and he who has been washed, and has experienced the virtue of the true blood, and scarlet wool and hyssop, can say *I am cleansed*. But he who asserts that he never needed cleansing, asserts what no man acquainted with his bible will believe—because it *cannot* be true. We dare not believe that any of God's types were slanders. Types are as true as words. You cannot lay your hand on a clean thing, in a church which has been three hundred years in a grossly polluted state. The means of instruction are defiled. The vessels remaining in a leprous house after the leprosy was discovered, were unclean. Lev. xiv. 36. And every *open vessel*, in a house defiled by a dead body, was unclean seven days. Numb. xix. 15. Our translation of the scriptures, bears the marks of the church's defilement. The translators were very honest, eminently learned, and pious men. We cannot account for their success, in producing a translation so nearly perfect, without supposing that they were divinely assisted. But God was true to his word. He has in a few instances left them to themselves, so far

as to shew to all succeeding generations, that the type of a leprous house was not an unmeaning thing. They commenced their work after the reign of Queen Elizabeth. And they have in some cases shewn, that their minds had been polluted in regard to servitude, by the sin of their times. They have in one case inserted the word slave, and more than once the word servant, without warrant from the original, where it alters the sense of the text. They have rendered the Hebrew word for a servant variously—*bondman*, and *bond servant*, and *servant*—from a mistaken notion, that the scriptures approved all the variety of servitude which existed in their day. The Greek words, *despotes* and *kurios*, are both translated master, though the latter means the master of a voluntary servant—the former a despot, or slave holder; as is evident from the fact, that the despot is never recognized as a church member, or addressed as a believer.

Our commentaries, our books for theological seminaries, and sabbath schools, are debled. The authors generally express their disapprobation of slavery. Some of them are at a loss for words to express their abhorrence of it. Yet they speak of it as practised by Abraham, and licensed by the law given at Sinai, and winked at by the apostles. Any one who will notice how the mind of the great and good Dr. Scott, labours in his exposition of Ex. xxi. can tell whether the church, when he was born, was a leprous house.

2. NOTHING SHORT OF RECOURSE TO THE ATONEMENT AND THE BLOOD OF SPRINKLING, WILL CLEANSE OUR SLAVE HOLDING CHURCHES. Even when the plague had disappeared from the walls of the house, it was unclean, until cleansed by an atonement, and with blood, and scarlet wool, and hyssop. There is an horrible thing in Israel, when ministers of the gospel cry out against urging our churches to repent, and apply to the high priest to cleanse us. They ought to know better, than to suppose that we may make colonization, or emancipation, a substitute. The abandonment of gross sin from selfish motives, accompanied with refusal to repent, will not avert the judgments of heaven from a nation, much less cleanse and save a guilty church. It is not the presence of the Africans that pollutes us. We rejoice indeed, to hear of any of them obtaining their freedom. But we ought to tremble at the very thought of their leaving us in our present impenitent state. In all probability, it would seal our destruction. The man who would then call upon us to repent, would be marked as a troubler of Israel. What would have been thought of the Israelite who, because the greenish or reddish streaks had disappeared from the wall, would have opposed an application for an atonement and cleansing. We say then, preach colonization, if you please; and urge emancipation as a duty which God requires, and one of the evidences of sorrow for sin, but let nothing be a substitute for repentance, and recourse to the blood of sprinkling.

3. GOD WILL BREAK DOWN OUR CHURCHES UNLESS WE PUT AWAY THE SLAVE HOLDING ABOMINATION. He has said it, and he will do it. He has given us ample pledges of his faithfulness to his threatenings, in the type of the leprous house. He twice broke down his temple at Jerusalem, on account of gross pollution. The last was its final ruin. For nearly eighteen hundred years, the very spot where it once stood, has been an unclean place, trodden under foot of all nations.

He has pledged his faithfulness that he will break down, by terrible judgments, the church in which African slavery originated. In the book of Revelation, he calls upon his children to escape from it, lest they perish in its ruins. He declares that he has abandoned it as a habitation of devils. He will pour out his plagues upon it till it is broken down, and cast into the unclean place. Let it never be forgotten, that one of his prominent grounds of controversy with that establishment is, the sin of making merchandize of "slaves and souls of men."

We fear the sin of slave holding has become, in many of our churches, "a fretting leprosy"—incurable. The slave trade and slave holding, have become unpopular, only as they have been found to be unprofitable. There appears to be no repentance towards God. Ours is not a sin of ignorance. We have light on this subject, as the light of the noon day. One of two things, however, will take place—there will be either a great crashing of churches; or leprous professors will be brought to raise the cry, *unclean, unclean.*

IV. *The argument drawn from the example of the Antediluvians is absurd.*

Sin is a deceitful thing. Every man, however honest and manly on every other subject, will be more or less deceitful whenever he engages in the defence of any gross sin. We see this in the manner in which the apologists for slavery approach the subject, and endeavor to draw an argument from Antediluvian practice. They seem to "name it filled with solemn awe!" Let us hear them. "Slavery existed and prevailed before the deluge. Gen. ix. 25." *Jahn.*

"Slavery is of very remote antiquity. It existed before the flood. Gen. ix. 25." *Horne.*

"Slavery seems to have existed before the flood. Noah speaks of it as a thing well known." *Nevin.*

Instead of tracing it as they would drunkenness or murder, to the lusts of wicked men, they introduce it as venerable for its age, and of some mysterious origin. We have seen several learned theories to account for its existence. They carefully avoid the question, whether the good or the bad men before the flood, were the slave holders, excepting an insinuation that they were such men as Abraham and Moses, and all the old testament believers. It is amusing to notice the blunder into which Jahn and, after him, Horne, have fallen, in selecting a text to prove that slave holding is older than the flood. Any thing that Moses has said about violence, when he is expressly giving us the character of the old world, and assigning the reason for its destruction, would have spoiled their theory as to the morality of slavery. They therefore both quote Gen. ix. 25—*Cursed be Canaan, a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren.* It seems that Noah, after the flood, predicted that Canaan, at some future day, would be a servant of servants. This is the proof that slavery existed before the flood! Mr. Nevin remarks—"Noah speaks of it (slavery) as a thing well known." He prudently quotes no text. And nine-tenths of children in the sabbath school, will conclude that he found it in some of the writings of Noah on Antediluvian slavery. Here we are furnished with another sweeping principle for the interpretation of

scripture. When a prophet predicts any thing, (the dissolution of the world for example,) we must remember, that it was something well known in his day, or which took place before the flood. We have never yet seen, and we never expect to see, the man who will undertake to make the bible justify slavery, without advancing principles which lead directly to infidelity or nonsense.

But we join issue with those advocates of slavery. We say it did exist before the flood. For the proof, we refer to Genesis vi. Moses tells us, more than once, that *the earth was filled with violence*—and that it was this sin which brought destruction on the old world. We are not told whether violence, as regards liberty, or life, or property, was most prevalent. No exception is made, and the man who makes any, must do it without *book*. They are charged with all that is covered by a fair interpretation of the word *violence*. Other sins prevailed. "*All flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth; the wickedness of man was great; every imagination of the thought of his heart was only evil continually.*" But the "*violence which covered the earth,*" is assigned, once and again, as the special reason for the world's destruction. With the exception of a single family, the law of God, respecting their neighbours rights, seems to have been universally disregarded. Power had become the law of the land. Men were renowned, just in proportion as they could sport with the lives, liberty, or property, of those around them. As God has been pleased to admonish future generations, by pointing out the process by which this state of things was brought about, it is surely worthy our attention.

1. "*There were giants in the earth in those days*"—i. e. monsters in iniquity, or men of gigantic stature and great muscular strength, like him of Gath. Such men, when violence was the road to honor and wealth, would be distinguished among the murderers, and man stealers, and slaveholders, and robbers of their day. The trade of violence would be carried on with a high hand.

2. *There were others who, though of common stature, were giants in wickedness.* These were the children of pious fathers and wicked mothers. *The sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose. When the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children unto them, the same became men which were of old (time) men of renown.* "The sons and daughters of God," and the "sons and daughters of men," are the names by which the church was distinguished from the world. "The sons of God" has, from time immemorial, been the distinguishing title of believers. God had early taught his people, by the excommunication of Cain, that they should keep themselves separate from the world. But in the profligacy of the times, the family of God began to amalgamate with the world. It marks the degeneracy of the times, that among professors of religion, a fair face was considered the paramount qualification for a companion in the tribulation and patience of a pious life. The daughters of men were pretty; and the fair faced syrens began to allure the sons of God into their camps. Probably the daughters of God sometimes married the sons of men. But as the piety of children greatly depend, under God, on the mother, such marriages were not, in their results, so uniform-

ly disastrous to the interests of religion. Instances are frequent, of praying mothers rearing pious families, while the father was dissipated and wicked. But an instance of a pious family of children, whose mother is a wicked woman, is of rare occurrence. Hence, only the marriage of the sons of God with the daughters of men, is noticed as hastening a state of universal violence. The children in such a house, would receive more instruction, be better fitted for active life, and for filling high stations, than those whose fathers were besotted with sin. But the mother, having been familiar, in her father's house, with deeds of blood, with theft, and kidnapping, and robbery, and slave holding, would give the education of the children just the finish necessary to make them men of renown in villainy. The Prophet Ezekiel describes the training which children would receive from such a mother. What is thy mother? "A lioness. She lay down among lions; she nourished her whelps among young lions. And she brought up one of her whelps, it became a young lion, and it learned to catch the prey; it devoured men, &c. Then she took another of her young whelps, and made him a young lion. And he went up and down among the lions, he became a young lion, and learned to catch the prey, and devoured men." When the houses of professors, instead of being lights to the world, and nurseries for the church, become dens for training young whelps to catch men, violence will soon cover the earth. The apostle Jude tells us, that Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied to these sons of violence, saying—"Behold the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints, to execute judgment, &c." But it was like preaching to wandering stars, or raging waves of the sea. Men, who for the gain of violence, have learned to spurn the authority of God, and trample on their neighbours rights, are very hopeless hearers. They requited him with hard speeches, and murmurings, and complainings; and endeavoured to frighten him with great swelling words. At last God commissioned Noah to tell them, that his "*spirit would not always strive—that the end of all flesh was come.*" In the mean time, he gave them an hundred and twenty years to make up their minds. Noah, a preacher of righteousness, whilst engaged in preparing an ark for the safety of his own family, warned and entreated them to cease from their wickedness. But it was all in vain. They continued to eat, and drink, and marry, and hold on in the trade of violence, till the flood came, and swept them all away. We would suppose, that the tongue of the grand accuser himself would falter, were he to undertake to say, in a sabbath school, that the Antediluvians were the first slave holders, and the patriarchs the next. Yet good men have done it; and we thus account for it—they were born in a leprous house, and have never been cleansed; and they *did it ignorantly and in unbelief.*

V. *The plea that Abraham was a slave holder, is false and slanderous.*

1. *Abraham was not a slave holder.*

Slave holders and their apologists, are fond of appealing to the history of Abraham. These appeals would be less shocking, were they not so frequently accompanied with unequivocal acknowledgments, that the practice in question is sinful in principle. This would be tolerable in a

stranger, or avowed enemy to religion; but from a professed christian, it is extremely unpleasant. It is generally admitted, that a saved sinner would hate sin, if you were to blot from his memory every consideration but the simple fact, that it is offensive in the sight of God. We therefore, do not profess to understand the religion of that man who clings to the practice of any thing confessedly sinful in principle, and pleads, as his apology, that others have done so before him.

Let us examine the proof which is to defend the bold position, that the father of the faithful was a slave holder. It is admitted on all hands, that he had *servants* (of some kind) *bought with his money*. Gen. xvii. 18. After all the efforts made for more than three hundred years, this is all they have proved. All they tell us about the manner in which he bought them, his motives, and the nature and extent of his power over them, is mere assumption. Yet they assert these things with as much precision and confidence, as if they were matters of divine record. It is a singular fact, that the imagination of man has not been able to contrive a way in which the patriarch could become a slave holder, without the adoption of some principle which is either shocking or disgusting.

We naturally inquire, of whom did he buy his servants? Did they voluntarily sell their services? Or were they sold by some person claiming the power to dispose of human beings as property? Slave holders perceive, that their cause is lost, the moment they admit that they sold themselves. They tell us, that Abraham bought them of men stealers or slave holders; and they insist on the privilege of being believed without proof. They seem to suppose, that it is impossible to draw the Patriarch's portrait, unless one of them be permitted to sit for the picture. We must not, they think, explain the phrase, "servants bought with money," by a reference to other passages in scripture where it is explained, but by reference to the practice among them. In our slave regions, when they commence house keeping, so as to hold a reputable standing in church and state, they buy a few slaves; and thus, in a few years, they have servants born in their houses, as Abraham had. Thus, then, they resemble a great and good man, in one of his features at least; and probably it is the only one which some of them ever admired.

If it was thus the man, who is eminently styled *the friend of God*, commenced business in the land of promise, he must have invested a vast amount of capital in brood slaves. We see him at one time, heading three hundred and eighteen active young men, born in his house. One author tells the children in the sabbath school, he had several thousands of slaves. It makes us shudder to think of his imprudence in risking his own life, and that of his beautiful Sarah, among such droves of slaves, in a strange country, surrounded by so many rude and warlike tribes. It distresses us to think of the trouble he must have had in keeping the wretches from running away, and in preventing them from stealing his cattle, and in securing the bars and bolts of his door at night. There is another much greater difficulty. The morals of the patriarch must have improved very little by quitting his kindred and country—if, in full view of the fact, that God destroyed the old world for disregarding their neighbours rights, he could engage in the system of violence on a scale, perhaps, unprecedented in the history of the world. But there is

no end to difficulties. How shall we acquit him of partnership with the man stealer? Surely he did not encourage, directly or indirectly, a crime which was punished with death by the Jewish law, and one against which, in our day, the civilized world has risen up as one man. How did he buy his slaves? Or how did he get them? Did he hire some scape galls to kidnap his neighbours' children? Or did the thieving creatures first do the stealing, and then Abraham pay them for their trouble, by buying their stolen ware? You may call these thieves, soldiers, if you please. An army of soldiers going to war to get slaves, is just a great number of man stealers banded together, to do business on a large scale. Was Abraham an accessory before or after the fact? In a civil court, it would make but little difference—and, in the court of heaven, perhaps none at all. But the advocates for slavery greatly prefer the latter. Their account of the matter is this. Abraham found the poor creatures deprived of their liberty; and knowing that they would be slaves at any rate, he bought them, not to restore to them their freedom, but to keep them for his own use. They insist that if there was any guilt in the business, it lay exclusively on the head of the man from whom he bought them. Such casuistry reminds us of a story, in old Dilworth's spelling book, of two thieves, who undertook to steal bacon in partnership. That they might be able to assert their innocence with a good conscience, (even thieves will talk about their consciences,) the one brought the bacon away—the other received, and put it under his cloak. Accordingly, when arraigned for theft, they both stoutly maintained that they were innocent; the one protesting that the property was not in his possession—the other, that he did not take it away. The object of the author of this story was, to fortify the minds of little children at school, against the sin of stealing, by inspiring them with hatred of this detestable apology. Little did the old man think, that the world, instead of hating, would become enamoured with it, and use it to justify trafficking in human beings; and that they would try to persuade the little children, that it was precisely the morality with which Abraham went to heaven.

But we have omitted one circumstance, to which they attach great importance, when apologizing for the patriarch and for themselves. They say, he did not purchase immediately from the kidnappers. That would be too bad. The slaves had passed through several hands before he bought them. Let us suppose then, that instead of two, there had been fifty thieves concerned in stealing the bacon—suppose that it had passed through the hands of all of them; and that the man with whom it was found, had rested his defence on such a plea. Should such a man, in any of our courts, escape justice, there are few of our towns in which the little boys would permit so worthy a citizen to leave, without some appropriate honors.

But we have omitted the best thing of all—*his intentions*. Abraham, we are told, was a man of the very best intentions. He found the poor creatures in the hands of the cruel slave holders, and he bought them for his own use, purely, that they might have a good master, and enjoy the privilege of pious instruction. Thus, if they can't make him a good christian, they are willing to make him a papist. Here we have one of the filthiest of all the popish maxims, viz: *the end sanctifies the deed*,

brought in to eke out slave holding morality. It is a curious fact, that slavery is purely popish in its origin, and uniformly defended on popish principles. Yet we are greatly mistaken, if even the great man at Rome would not be ashamed of a proselyte, who was ushered into his presence with such a eulogy as this—"Here, holy father, is one of the brightest ornaments of your religion. To give you his excellent character in a few words—he is a man of the best intentions; and he uses them as pick-locks to get at his neighbour's property."

It is amusing to hear the privilege of the slaves, as regards religious instruction, brought forward to balance the sin of holding them in bondage; especially in a country where rulers are making it penal to instruct them. The writer of these remarks, spent nearly twenty years in a slave region; and was more or less acquainted with, perhaps, some hundred slave holding families. He has heard this apology from the lips of some of the worst men he ever knew. They seemed to become eloquent when they talked of the blessedness of those Africans who had been stolen from their own pagan country, and brought to this happy christian land. He avers, that in every family possessed of any considerable number of slaves, so far as his knowledge extended, either all, or some of the slaves, were unable to read the bible; grossly ignorant of the christian religion; in the habit of absenting themselves from family worship, and the house of God; and living, uncontroled by their masters, in the open profanation of the sabbath. The apology from both ministers and people was—it is impossible for a master to train his slaves to the knowledge and practice of religion. Nor is it believed that this was, in a single instance, a deliberate falsehood. It is the sober truth; and it is easily accounted for. An ignorant American never hates Mahometanism, till he has an Arab master. A stupid African never feels so strong an aversion to christianity, as when he finds himself stripped of his dearest rights, and in chains, riveted upon him by the hands of a christian. Slaves throughout the world, are men; and they have common sense enough to know, that religion, to be worth any thing, must make its possessor an honest man. They, therefore, spurn the proposal with indignation, when a man, who is thriving by robbing his neighbors, offers to take them by the hand, and lead them to heaven. That minister in the south who, by marriage, has become the owner of hundreds of slaves, and has it blazoned among the churches as an evidence of his heavenly mindedness—that he takes no stipend, but expends his whole ministerial labours among his own slaves, is just telling the world that he has played the fool with his ministry. We have no doubt that, with his bible and cowskin, he can make his congregation understand what *he means* by one text—*servants be obedient to your masters.** Account for it as you will, slaveholders tell the truth when they say, it is impossible for them to train their slaves to the knowledge and practice of religion. Is it not strange, then, that they do not see, that the system of slavery is in itself a system of iniquity? And is it not passing strange,

* It has been said in his defence, that he employs an overseer, and attends to nothing himself, but preaching. That is, he preaches to his congregation personally, and cowskins them by proxy; and if an overseer does it, he will do it faithfully.

that they should attempt to stultify the patriarch Abraham, by insisting that he held his neighbours in bondage, for the sake of attempting an impossibility? The plain truth is—to reconcile us to their claims of kindred with Abraham, they seem to think it necessary, that they should make him a finished villain. And truly, if we must believe all that they say of him, we shall have no objections to their claims being allowed.

2. *The servants whom Abraham bought with money, were voluntary servants.*

We now appeal to the word of God, the supreme judge in all religious controversies, and the only infallible interpreter of scripture phrases. Our position is—*servants bought with money*, means, in scripture language, persons who voluntarily sold their services wholly, or in part.

1. *We prove this by the scriptural use of the phrase.* As the subject under discussion, is the nature of servitude in the patriarchal age, it will be proper to attend particularly to the history of the patriarchs. It will be coming still nearer the point, if we enquire what kind of servants were bought by those descendants of Abraham, who most nearly resembled him in piety. Pious children, for ages, would revere his memory; and in the regulation of all their concerns, scrupulously regard the example of so venerable an ancestor. Happily for our purpose, his great grandson Joseph, who appears to have inherited much of his spirit, bought a vast number of servants. He purchased all the inhabitants of Egypt as servants for his master. Joseph said unto the people, *behold I have bought you this day, and your land, for Pharaoh.* All the inhabitants of the kindred cities which lined the river Nile, and of the innumerable towns and villages which studded the land of Egypt, were Pharaoh's bought servants! According to the slave holder's mode of interpretation, they were his slaves. Every bone, sinew, and muscle, every body and soul throughout that vast empire, was his property; and at any time could be sold with his hogs and cattle, and turned into money. A slave holder would exclaim—what a happy monarch!*

But it is a fact, acknowledged more than once in the chapter from which we quote, (Gen. 47.) that Joseph bought all the Egyptians as servants for Pharaoh. Slave holders insist, that the phrase "servants bought with money," means slaves. It is by this phrase, without any other proof, they undertake to fix on Abraham the charge of slave holding. And it is by quoting this phrase, used in the life of the patriarch, that they would prove the lawfulness of depriving a man of his freedom, and making him work all his life without wages. We here join issue with them. On the meaning of this phrase, let the question in debate stand or fall. We here notice a remarkable instance of the corrupting influence of slavery. The learned and pious Mr. Poole, seems to take for granted, that Joseph made them slaves. He is exceedingly puzzled in the inter-

*Cervantes, in his history of the famous knight of the lions, to make the squire ridiculous, makes him insist, that his master should reward his services with the government of an island near the coast of Africa, so that he could ship off his black subjects, and turn them into cash. The Poet hardly suspected that the same notions of morality which would make Sancho Panza a laughing stock, would, in spite of his sneers at the Pope's morality, be admired by philosophers, and defended by grave divines as worthy of Joseph and Abraham.

pretation of verse 21st: "As for the people he removed them to cities, from one end of the borders of Egypt, even to the other." He supposes this removal was necessary to wear out the remembrance of their patrimonial lands, and their grief for the loss of them, and to prevent insurrections, &c. But he had still greater difficulty in apologizing for Joseph. And he resorts to the usual cant—*he treated his slaves well*. He says—"If any should think that Joseph dealt hardly with them, and made an ill use of their necessity, he will see how moderately and mercifully he deals with them." Now any man, who will not use the slave holders spectacles, will find no difficulty in understanding the passage, when he looks at the context. While the seven years famine was raging, and the money and all the substance of the people had been expended, they came to Joseph and said, "buy us and our land for bread, and we and our land will be servants unto Pharaoh." Accordingly, from one end of the land to the other, he removed the people into cities where the corn was stored up, that food might be distributed with convenience and economy. Toward the close of the famine, when the people were about to return to their farms, he said—"Lo here is seed for you, and ye shall sow the land, and it shall come to pass, that ye shall give the fifth part unto Pharaoh, and four parts shall be yours." We have now settled two points. One is, that *servants bought with money*, means, in the history of the patriarchs, persons who sold their services. The other is this—the man who bought of his neighbour one-fifth of the annual produce of his field, is said to have bought that man. That Abraham's bought servants were those who, for money, engaged voluntarily to give him an annual portion of their labours in the field, or in attending his cattle, or otherwise.

2. *From his uniformly just and pious character.* The inspired historian has been careful to exhibit him in his public character, in his intercourse with his neighbors, and in his management of his household.

1. *Abraham was famous as a pious prophet of the true religion.* Like all the patriarchs, he was also priest and king in his family. He is spoken of as a *mighty prince*, and we see kings carefully courting alliances with him. But it is as *prophet*, that he particularly shines. Luther is not more famous in Christendom, than Abraham was among the nations of the East as a prophet of the true God, and an opposer of the corruptions and abominations of his day. The Egyptians admired, and imitated him in the rite of circumcision. The Persians, "in their ancient accounts, call the book which contains their sacred religion, *the book of Abraham*. They call their religion Kish Abraham, or *the religion of Abraham*." So Protestants frequently call their religion, *the religion of Luther*. We see the estimation in which his principles and character were held by Melchizedeck, when he publicly blessed him.

2. *God speaks of him as remarkably devoted to the instruction of his family and dependents, and signally blessed in his labours.* "I know him that he will command his children and household after him, and they shall keep the ways of the Lord to do justice and judgment." Gen. xviii. 19.

3. *He was eminently a son of peace, and made great worldly sacrifices to promote peace in the earth.* It does not appear that he ever engaged in war, or that he ever was in a battle in his life, except once.

Some slave making warriors had invaded the country, and taken captive his nephew, and some of his neighbours; and he pursued and rescued them. In this successful expedition, the combined forces of four confederate kings were at his mercy; but he did not bring home a single captive or slave; nor would he appropriate to his own use so much as a thread of the spoil.

As if the inspired historian intended to put to shame all insinuations that the Patriarch would deprive others of their rights, he records several instances of his relinquishing his own for the sake of peace, and the credit of religion. His servants had digged the famous well of Beersheba. According to the custom of the times, it was his property; and a good well was, in that country, very precious property. But some of the servants [subjects] of Abimelech, king of Gerar, *violently took it away*. He had sufficient power to chastise them, and shew his neighbors that he was a man of spirit, who was not to be trifled with. But he was not a man of strife, and it was his religion to make sacrifices for the sake of peace. Abimelech would not have heard of it, but for the following circumstance: Having observed that *God was with Abraham in all that he did*, the king, with his characteristic meanness, came with Phicol, his chief captain, to intreat him to enter into a covenant of friendship with him and his son, and his son's son. Abraham mentioned to him the circumstance of the well. The reply was—"I wot not who hath done this thing; neither didst thou tell me, neither heard I of it but to-day. Gen. xxi. 22—26.

On one occasion, there was a strife between the herdsmen of Abraham's cattle, and the herdsmen of Lot's cattle. This state of things, always afflicting to the soul of the Patriarch, was peculiarly so now, as there were lookers on. "The Canaanite and the Perizzite dwelled then in the land. And Abraham said unto Lot, let there be no strife I pray thee between me and thee, and between my herdsmen and thy herdsmen, for we are brethren. Is not the whole land before thee? Separate thyself I pray thee from me. If thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right; or if thou go to the right hand, then I will go to the left." Gen. xiii. 5.

4. *In the most minute accounts given us of Abraham's house, on occasions when he was entertaining strangers, &c. we see nothing which looks like slavery.* It is the more necessary to notice this, on account of statements made in our most popular works on biblical antiquities. In a work published for the use of sabbath schools, we are told that Abraham had several thousands of slaves, and no other kind of servants. Let us see whether there were slaves in his house, on one of those occasions most likely to make them visible. See Gen. xviii. It seems that in the plains of Mamre, while Abraham was sitting in his tent door, in the heat of the day, "he lifted up his eyes and looked, and lo three men stood by him; and when he saw them, he ran to meet them from the tent door, and bowed himself toward the ground, and said, my Lord, if now I have found favour in thy sight, pass not away I pray thee from thy servant. Let a little water I pray you be fetched, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree; and I will fetch a morsel of bread, and comfort ye your hearts; after that ye shall pass on; for therefore are ye come to your servant. And they said, so do as thou hast said."

When dinner is to be speedily prepared for strangers who have unexpectedly arrived, we expect to see slaves in motion, from the kitchen to the parlour, especially as they are so numerous. But we are told—"Abraham hastened into the tent unto Sarah, and said make ready quickly three measures of fine meal, knead it, and make cakes upon the hearth.—And Abraham ran unto the herd, and fetched a calf tender and good, and gave it unto a young man; and he hasted to dress it."

It surprises us to see Abraham and Sarah, and the young man who killed and dressed the calf, do all the work—especially, in a house where slaves could be counted by the thousand. But surely, we will see some of them in their livery, around the table, when the guests are to be attended at dinner. But—"Abraham took butter and milk, and the calf which he had dressed, and set it before them; and he stood by them under the tree, and they did eat."

We see in all this, nothing but the hospitality and plainness becoming an eminently pious man.

5. *Abraham was careful in all his intercourse with the world, to show that he owed his riches to the blessing of God, on honest industry.* When he took from the four kings the plunder, consisting of all the goods of Sodom and Gomorrah, and all their victuals, the king of Sodom urged him to keep them as his own. According to the custom of the times, it was his lawful prize. But he would not have so much as a shoe latchet—"lest thou shouldst say I have made Abraham rich." Gen. xiv. 23.

With the same object in view, he would not accept, as a present, from the hands of a prince, a burying place for Sarah. He would buy it. Nor would he take advantage of the friendship of the seller, or the technicalities of bargain making, to pay for it in the cheap currency of the neighborhood. His religion had made him an honest man. "He weighed to Ephron the silver which he had named in the audience of the sons of Heth, four hundred shekels of silver, current money with the merchant. Gen. xxiii. 16.

6. *The heavenly mindedness ascribed to him, forbids the idea of his being a slave maker.* We are told, that he lived as one who considered himself "a stranger and pilgrim on the earth—who desired a better country, that is a heavenly." He would not build for himself a house or city, but "sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs of the same promise; for he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. Heb. xi. 9." We think that the character which the scriptures give of Abraham, justifies us in saying, that his bought servants were not slaves. We feel like submitting the question to the decision of any man who has not sworn fealty to his lusts. The history of the patriarch clearly furnishes the following facts respecting his servants.

1. *Abraham brought them from Haran.* It does not appear that he bought any after he came into the land of Canaan—perhaps Hagar should be excepted. We here take occasion to remark, that Abraham never sold a human being; nor was the lawfulness of doing so, admitted by any of his family. Sarah never thought of selling Hagar when she became troublesome. The only way of getting rid of her, was to turn her out of doors, as they do troublesome servants, in countries where slavery is un-

known. Moses tells us [Gen. xii. 5.] that the souls which Abraham brought unto Canaan, were those whom he and Sarah and Lot, had gotten in Haran. The three hundred and eighteen young men, whom he commanded in his heroic expedition against the four kings, were probably their children.

2. *Abraham's servants were his converts to the true religion.* This is not conjecture. It appears [Gen. xii. 5.] they had been obtained by the joint labours of Abraham, Sarah, and Lot. Moses tells us expressly, that the souls which they brought with them into the land of Canaan, were souls which they had *made* (gotten) in Haran. The original word is *Osa*. It is known that after leaving Urr of the Chaldees, he spent considerable time in Haran, until the death of his father Terah. During that time he and his pious wife and nephew, made many souls. A commentator, who says they were their children, must have spoken without thinking. Abraham had no children at that time; and Lot could not have thousands. It is distressing to read the comments on this passage, by some of the wisest and best men who had the misfortune to write, after the church had become a leprous house. Even the venerable Poole, gives the following as the probable meaning—"gotten, i. e. procured either by conquest or purchase, or any other lawful and usual way." A fine hint for a slave holder! They were slaves, obtained by trading with kidnappers, or secured, in war expeditions, by Abraham, bravely supported by Sarah and Lot. We think this would not be a very lady like employment for Sarah, nor a very pious one for Abraham. The apologists for slavery, and they alone, are responsible for any levity, or ludicrous effect, produced by looking their principles fairly in the face. An inspired apostle recommends to christian wives, the example of Sarah, in her modest and humble deportment towards her husband. But it seems, they cannot understand her history, or have her example fully before them, unless they occasionally view her mounted on her war horse, heroically sustaining her husband and captain in the field of battle, and in his desperate charges on the villages in Haran, for the purpose of obtaining slaves to take with them to the promised land. (She would need help in that new country.) But to understand Moses, it is not necessary that we should consult our systems of theology or morals, and much less our lusts. The only way of ascertaining what any writer means, is by attending to what he says.

The word *Osa*, signifies to finish or give character to a person or thing. It is used [Gen. ii. 2.] to signify the finishing of God's creation. It expresses (Gen. v. 1.) God's work in fashioning the man whom he had created, according to his own image and likeness. It is used (Ezek. xviii. 31.) to express the work of regeneration, or restoring, in a sinner, the lost image of his maker. In the passage before us, it expresses the instrumentality of a prophet, and his pious wife, and nephew, in the conversion of the souls whom they brought with them from Haran. It shocks us to hear of Abraham and his family *making souls*. We had assigned them the very different employment of stealing souls. But it does not so affect us, to hear of an apostle *begetting souls*, or of an evangelist *saving souls*, or of souls being *created in Christ*, through the instrumentality of ministers of the gospel. Perhaps some critic, should he think it worth while to triumph over us, will produce texts where *Osa* is used, without

any reference to conversion; and then suggest a doubt whether any of those servants were converted through the instrumentality of the patriarch and his friends. But if he is acquainted with his bible, he can also produce texts where nearly all the technical terms of the new testament are used, without reference to conversion; and then express his doubt whether any man has ever been instrumental in converting sinners. The Roman vulgate translates the phrase "souls that they had gotten," *animas quas fecerunt*—*souls which they had made*. The Chaldee expounds it, "souls that they had instructed or turned from idolatry and taught in the true religion." The Bamberg synopsis will have it, that they were slaves, obtained by conquest or purchase, but expressly admits that "the Hebrews had a tradition that Abraham brought over many men, and Sarah many women, from infidelity to the knowledge and worship of the true God; and thus made them spiritually." It appears to be a fact, that in this light they had been viewed by their children in every age. But when the Pope found it necessary to pipe all hands to the work of defending the slave trade, a great revolution was effected. Sarah was converted into a warrior, and Abraham reduced to the level of a negro trader, merely to keep slave makers in countenance. Surely it comports better with his character to suppose, that he spent his time in Haran in making known the way of salvation, than to suppose that he was employed in storming the towns and hamlets around, for the purpose of obtaining slaves.

2. *Abraham's servants were partakers of the same faith and hope with their master.* On this point, we have decisive testimony. God speaks of them as persons "who kept the ways of the Lord to do justice and judgment." Their piety is also evident from the fact, that when circumcision was set up in the Patriarch's family, they were all adjudged suitable subjects for "the seal of the righteousness of faith." The notion has prevailed to some extent, and the Jesuits were the authors of it, that mere connexion with faithful Abraham, was a sufficient qualification, without any personal piety. This has given rise to some strange cases of conscience. Some years since, a slave holder was much troubled in mind about not having his negro men and women baptized. It was not pretended that they had any piety. On the contrary, his reply to the charge of holding them in bondage for the sake of gain was, "they are a mere expense; and *rot them*, they are so lazy and wicked, that no body can have any peace with them." Still he thought, the standing of their master ought to entitle them to some church privileges. As baptism had come in the room of circumcision—and as Abraham's slaves were circumcised, on account of the faith of their master, it bore heavily on his mind that he was not walking in the footsteps of the father of the faithful, unless he had his negroes baptized.

The command to Abraham to circumcise all in his house, whom he had bought with his money, was evidently predicated on the fact previously acknowledged, that they *kept the ways of the Lord*. We never meet precisely the same command again.

3. *Abraham and his servants came together to the land of Canaan, from a regard to their mutual interest and comfort.* It is not pleasant to be a stranger in a strange land. It would lighten the Patriarch's difficulties to have the society of some hundreds, who were partakers of the

same faith, and endeared to him by the circumstance of his having been the instrument of their conversion to God. To them, it would be distressing to be left behind. He was a mighty prince, an eminent prophet, and the spiritual father of them and many of their children. And when he was gone, who would instruct them and their little ones, and save them from that darkness which, like the shadow of death, brooded over Urr of the Chaldees, and was fast gathering over the whole world? But the separation was unnecessary. He needed servants to till the ground, and attend his cattle, and he was able liberally to reward their labours. They, on the other hand, needed instruction, protection, and employment. The command to leave his idolatrous kindred and country, did not forbid him to take pious Lot. Nor would it hinder him from taking any number as his household, who were sincere worshippers of the true God. He who has witnessed the separation of a pious and successful minister from an affectionate people, can fancy the scene, when it was known among the people that he had received a command to go forward. We can almost see them gathering around his tent, utterly refusing to be left behind. "Entreat us not to leave thee or return from following after thee; for whither thou goest, we will go; and where thou lodgest we will lodge; thy people shall be our people, and thy God our God; where thou diest, will we die, and there will we be buried; the Lord do so to us, and more also, if aught but death part us." If Abraham and Lot possessed the spirit manifested by Moses to Hobab, we can imagine the reply. "We are journeying unto the land of which the Lord said I will give it you. Come ye with us, and we will do you good; for the Lord hath spoken good concerning Abraham. And it shall be if you go with us, yea, it shall be that what goodness the Lord shall do unto us, the same will we do unto you." Such a view of the relationship between Abraham and his servants, will, we think, throw light on some of those pleasant scenes between him and them, after they had grown grey together in the promised land. But no man ever received any help in the study of the bible, from any thing he had seen of slavery, or from any book written to prove that the father of the faithful was a slave holder.

3. *The servants* (so called by our translators of the bible,) *born in Abraham's house were not slaves.* It is assumed by the apologists for slavery, and by some of those writers on Jewish and biblical antiquities, who profess the greatest abhorrence of the principle of slave holding, that the children of those servants whom Abraham brought with him from Haran, were born slaves. "Abraham had servants born in his house," is the confounding argument in favour of dooming African infants to perpetual slavery. But surely we can dispose of this matter in a moment, by just looking at it. Was this indeed the character of *that Abraham*? Was it thus he requited the affection of the good people who followed all the way from Haran? Did he, the moment they were settled in Canaan, convert their tents into so many baby-traps? Did he spend his life in making property of human beings?—the very sin which has roused all nations against the slave trade? The man who, when he hears the cries of a new-born infant in his kitchen, or some out cabin, bolts in and seizes, and makes it his property, is as finished a kidnapper as he who skulks around the shores of Africa. In the sight of heaven, they are both man stealers. The on-

ly difference is, the one catches human beings in Africa—the other catches them on his own premises. When we hear such insinuations against Abraham, it excites in our bosoms a most strange mixture of merriment, and horror, and pity, and indignation, and contempt. Yet all this, and more, is asserted of *the friend of God*. Let us hear the proof:

1. *They refer us to the case of Eleazer*. Gen. xv. All that we can gather from this passage respecting him is, that he was originally from Damascus, that he was a son of Abraham's house, (or born in his house,) that he was the steward, and that the Patriarch, in the prospect of dying childless, had designated him as his heir. And this is the evidence that he was born a slave!! People are apt to see things which engross their affections. Theologians who can see, in this passage, a proof of involuntary, hereditary, or perpetual slavery, remind us of the fine lady who, when looking at the moon through a telescope, fancied that she saw a beautiful new fashioned cap.

2. *They likewise quote Gen. xiv. 14*. We cannot now detect all the purposes for which we have seen or heard this text quoted. We have already noticed two. One is, to prove that it is lawful to make slaves of captives. The other, that it is right to enslave those who are born in our house. "When Abraham heard that his brother was taken captive, he armed his trained servants born in his house, three hundred and eighteen, and pursued them to Dan." Few will pretend, that the training here spoken of was of the military kind. That would blow up the slave holders theory. It would be absurd to talk of a master spending his time, and hazarding his life, in drilling his slaves to the use of arms. It is true, that the prowess which the Patriarch displayed on this occasion, shews that he had all the talents necessary for being as great a nuisance in his own neighborhood, and as extensive a curse to mankind, as Alexander or Caesar. But this is the only instance in which he meddled with arms. The work of a prophet or instructor, was the business of his life. The idea of such a man appearing ordinarily at the head of some hundreds of trained warriors, might suit the views of a Jesuit or Mahometan; but it is utterly inadmissible among sober christians. Moses conveys no such idea. He tells us they were trained or instructed ones. We have God's testimony that he trained his household in the ways of the Lord; but not a particle of evidence that he trained them to the trade of war. It appears, then, that they were what would have been called, in the new testament, his disciples—the pious young men who were under his instruction. It appears also, that they had been born in his house.

But the more important inquiry is—where is the evidence that these young men were slaves? He must have "optics sharp," who can see it. There would be no impropriety in calling them servants, in the sense in which the dependants or subjects of a prince are servants. But Moses does not call them servants. Our translators have been careful, by having the word servants put in Italic, to let us know that it is a mere supplement of their own. They did it no doubt for the same reason that, in another place, they have inserted the word slave; i. e. to make their text plain. And they were permitted to do it, to shew all future generations that they commenced their work after the reign of that "bright occidant."

al star," Queen Elizabeth. The original text, says nothing about either slaves or servants.

The text says, that "he armed his disciples [or instructed ones] born in his own house, three hundred and eighteen, and pursued, &c." And this is the evidence that he made property of the infants born on his premises. Let us suppose a parallel case. During our last war, the nephew of one of our ministers on the frontier, was taken captive by the Indians. His uncle on hearing it, armed a company of the pious young men born in his congregation, and pursued and rescued him. On the appearance of this statement in the newspaper, a man who had been troubled in his conscience about holding his fellow men in slavery, undertook to comfort himself, and quiet his neighbours, by proving that the minister must have been in the habit of kidnapping all the children born in his congregation; and that the young men, who fought so bravely for him, must have been some of the poor creatures whom he had doomed to slavery from their birth. This would be counted very crazy logic. His family and neighbours, would think seriously of confining him. Yet the poor man was just using the very argument which had been so successfully employed for three hundred years, from the pulpit and the press, to prove that Abraham was a slave holder.

Every view which Moses gives us of Abraham, and the children of those pious people who followed him from Haran, is pleasant. There appears to have been a mutual confidence, a community of interest, and just such affection as might be expected between the man of God and the children under his care. Let us examine more particularly the passage before us.

While Abraham and his people were living peacefully in the plain of Mamre, they were roused by the arrival of a runner, with news that Amraphel, king of Shinar; Arioch, king of Ellasar; Chederlaomer, king of Elam; and Tidal, king of nations, had invaded the country—that in a battle fought in the vale of Siddim, they had completely routed the five kings around Sodom, and were returning home *with all the goods of Sodom and Gomorrah, and all their victuals*, and that Lot, his brother's son, was among the captives. We would expect so peaceful a man as Abraham, who had never been in a battle in his life, to set down overwhelmed with the heavy tidings. But his energies were roused. He resolved immediately on an enterprize which, for brilliancy, has few parallels in the history of military exploits. He armed 318 of his instructed young men, who had been born in his house, and pursued the enemy. The fathers of these young men would, no doubt, have cheerfully hazarded their lives for him. But they were too old. He must have active men, in the prime of life, who could keep up with him in a hot pursuit of several days and nights. It seems that his kind neighbours, Aneq, Esehoh, and Mamre, on hearing that bad news had reached *Abram the Hebrew*, hastened to his tent and joined him. With a little delay, they could have brought considerable forces to his aid. But no time must be lost. The enemy already had considerable start, and would soon be beyond pursuit. He had three hundred and eighteen fine young men who, from their infancy, had loved him as their teacher and foster-father; all of whom would risk their lives for him. And God Almighty, who brought him to that

land, in all dangers and troubles; *was his shield and exceeding great reward. He pursued them, and passed safely.* Isaiah xli. 3. The enemy were overtaken in the night time; and by a disposition of his force, which would have done honor to a veteran in warfare, he attacked them in different quarters at the same time, and "smote them, and pursued them unto Hobak, and brought back all the goods, and also brought back again his brother Lot, and his goods, and the women also, and the people." Having been familiar with appeals to the example of Abraham, to prove that it is right to make slaves of captives because we conquered them, and of infants because they were caught on our premises, we naturally expect to see him return home with droves of slaves, and more plunder than his 318 young men can carry. But, it seems, we had entirely mistaken his character. He did not take a single captive—much less did he think of making any of them slaves. He compelled them to give up the souls and the goods they had stolen, and then sent them home to their families. But surely he was too good a man to be more particular than his neighbours. He will at least take all the goods as his own. The custom of the times, and the opinion of the neighbours, would justify him; and the king of Sodom is urgent that he should do so. Abraham was not one of those slippery professors, who can regulate their religion by the opinion of their neighbours, when it sorts with their covetousness, or by the custom or law of the land. He would let them know, that he would not undertake to dictate to the three men who went with him; but as to himself, "I have lifted up my hands unto the Lord most high God, the possessor of heaven and earth, that I will not take from a thread to a shoe latchet, and that I will not take any thing that is thine, lest thou shouldst say I have made Abraham rich; save only that which the young men have eaten, and the portion of the men which went with me, Anen, Esehoh, and Mamre; let them take their portion." This was *that Abraham*; and such were the young men born in his house. No wonder Melchizedeck, though king of Salem, and priest of the most high God, did not consider it a stoop from his dignity, to meet such a man with bread and wine, and bless him, saying—"Blessed be Abraham of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth; and blessed be the most high God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thine hands."

We have purposely avoided any analysis of the Sinai covenant respecting servitude, excepting so far as it was made necessary by the appeals of Mr. Horne and others. We have also avoided remarks on principles inculcated under the words *servants and slaves*, in Biblical Antiquities, and the Dictionary of the Bible, and other popular works lately published, for the purpose of forming the morals of our children in Sabbath Schools. We believe that they are at this moment poisoning the fountain of instruction, and ruining the moral health of the rising generation. But they require attention which our present limits forbid. In the mean time, we challenge the host of apologists for slavery, to produce a divine statute, or any text of scripture, which authorized any man *to use his neighbour's service without wages, and not give him for his work.* Jer. xxii. 13. Mr. Horne, and all who have attempted it, have failed.

VI. *Slave holders and their apologists, have done more towards bringing the old testament, and particularly the law of Moses, into contempt, than all the infidels of this, or any other age.*

The standing of a negro trader is, in any country, very low. In spite of custom and their lusts, men every where look down with contempt upon the man who spends his earthly term in trafficking in immortal beings. If we teach our children that patriarchs were such men; that the old testament church was a great society, licensed to carry on such traffick; and that the religion by which they were governed, rose no higher in morality than the laws which regulate a slave farm, what can we expect as the result? Our children will either have very little sense, or they will have very little respect for any thing connected with the religion of old times, and feel strong temptation to say with the poet's devil—"farthest from it is best." Account for it as you will, *the law and the prophets* are, to a great extent, laid aside as useless, or worse than useless. The sentiment is prevalent, that the law which God gave by Moses, was a rough system, fit only for the government of a rough people, in the barbarous ages—that it is unintelligible, or that its meaning is arbitrary—and that it inculcated some things very inconsistent with the spirit of the gospel. You can hear professors of religion tell how their sensibilities are shocked, even by the devotional exercises of old testament saints. Something very like contempt is often manifested, when the *Jewish law*, or the *Jewish religion*, is mentioned. *That old Jewish bible* is, with many, the contemptuous name of all scriptures given before the coming of Christ, whenever they are named, excepting when they are appealed to, in behalf of slavery. All this, in full view of the fact that God was the author of them, and that they are the means which he, at this moment, uses, in making men holy, and preparing them for heaven.

The appalling fact is, we have abused the law of Moses, till we almost hate it as we do the Africans. We treat it as incapable of being injured. For centuries, we have been prostituting it to the support of one of the most horrible systems of oppression, on which the sun has ever shone. Is it strange, then, that there should be a general shyness of it? He must think but little who does not perceive, that if all that is said of it by the advocates of slavery be true, it must be a very unsafe companion for one who wishes to get to heaven—of very little use to a man who wishes to spend his days in walking in the footsteps of the Son of God. Is it strange, that it has become the scoff of fools? Place the best man on earth in the pillory, and write *ROGUE* on his back, and every idle boy in the streets will shout and throw stones at him. The public mind will be affected by appeals to the Jewish law, for the justification of any gross sin, just as the mind of the rabble were affected, in relation to the Saviour, by the conduct of the high priest. Every attentive reader of the Evangelists, has noticed the great contrast between the respect paid to him at the commencement, and the treatment he received toward the close of his mock trial. Even the Roman veterans, who were led out to take him, when Jesus was pointed out, hesitated, and went backward. The bold-est of the rabble stood in awe of him, and kept their distance. But the moment the high priest rent his garment, and pronounced him guilty of blasphemy, the scene was changed. Any ruffian could then approach

and insult him. *Then did they spit in his face, and buffeted him, and others smote him with the palms of their hands.*

The reckless manner in which authors, ever since the church has become polluted with slavery, write on biblical and Jewish antiquities, shews that we are far gone in want of regard for the old testament things. We generally find the customs of Moses, and paganism, and the wickedness of Jews, all mingled together, so that none but a first rate biblical scholar can distinguish them. The result is—in most cases, the young reader swallows down poison and all, under the delusion that he is drinking in the instruction of the old testament. We select, as an illustration of this remark, a paragraph from “Jewish Antiquities,” by the highly esteemed W. M. BROWN, D. D.

In vol. 2. page 315, under the head of “Jewish mode of warfare,” he says: “But the most careless reader of scripture must have noticed the horrors to which the besieged were sometimes reduced, and the difference of treatment as to captives in ancient and modern times; for independent of that severity which God enjoined with respect to the Canaanites, to punish them for their profligacy, and insure the future safety and morals of Israel, we find the conquerors setting their feet on the necks of their enemies, cutting off the heads of some, the noses and ears of others, and the hands and feet of others, putting them under saws and harrows of iron, and making them pass through the brick kiln, whilst they emasculated the seed royal to prevent their aspiring to the throne. Even the fair sex were most shamefully abused—for some were exposed to a brutal soldiery; mothers were destroyed with their children; children were dashed against the stones; and women with child ripped up; whilst those of rank were wantonly stripped naked, to walk in that state exposed to every inclemency of the weather, and often reduced to hard labour, like the meanest slaves,” &c.

We venture to say that a more frightful picture never was presented to the eye of man. About twenty texts of scripture are quoted in the margin as proofs. Not a word is dropped to shew how much of this was the work of a brutal, pagan soldiery. The young reader is left to suppose, that an army of Israelites could go through all this high-handed wickedness, and when tried by the Jewish law, receive the plaudit—WELL DONE. The reader will perhaps be surprised to hear, that excepting the text in which the symbolical actions of Joshua on a particular occasion are noticed, and another which records David’s cruel treatment of the Ammonites, in the same season of hardness of heart in which he behaved so shamefully to the house of Uriah, nearly all the other texts quoted have reference, not to the Jewish, but to the pagan mode of warfare. We may be told, that as such brutal treatment of females, &c. was practised by pagan armies, and as these things are noticed in the bible, it was right to put them down among Jewish antiquities, under the head of “Jewish mode of warfare.” If so—the fair way of writing any man’s history, is by detailing the wickedness of his neighbors. According to the principle on which Jewish Antiquities are generally written, we ought never to censure Hume and other infidel historians. They never charged christians with any thing too bad for pagans. When such a man as Dr. Brown could write thus, what must be the state of public opinion? When we read our

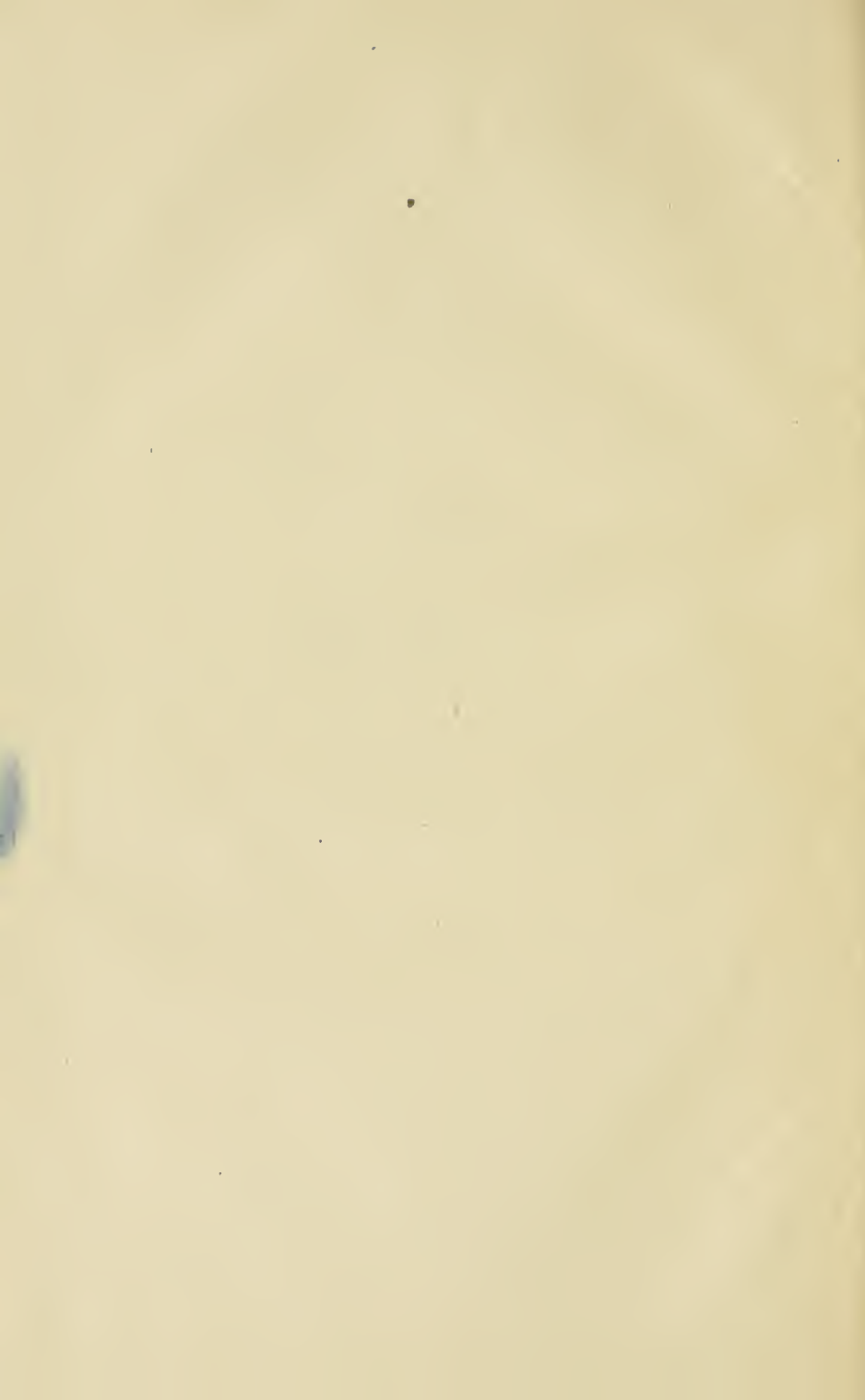
modern productions on the life of Abraham and the law of Moses, it requires an effort to shake off the impression that there is a combination, in the church and out of it, to establish slavery, though it should be on the ruins of all regard for the bible, and the God of Israel. *Shall I not visit for these things? saith the Lord—and shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?*

FINIS.



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